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MOTOCROSS

ACTION MAGAZINE

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NUMBER NINE

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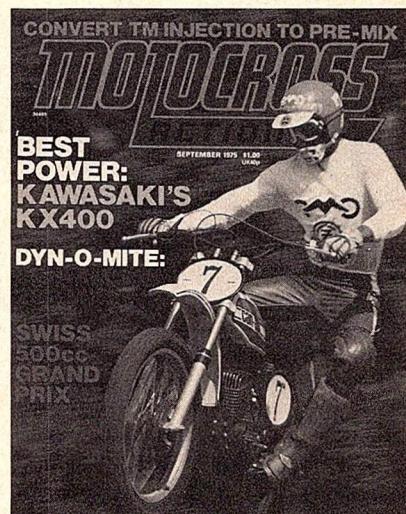
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Hi-Torque Publications, Inc.
16200 Ventura Blvd.
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WEST
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16400 Ventura Blvd.
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5901 N. Cicero Ave.
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Photo Production by
PUBLISHER'S LAB
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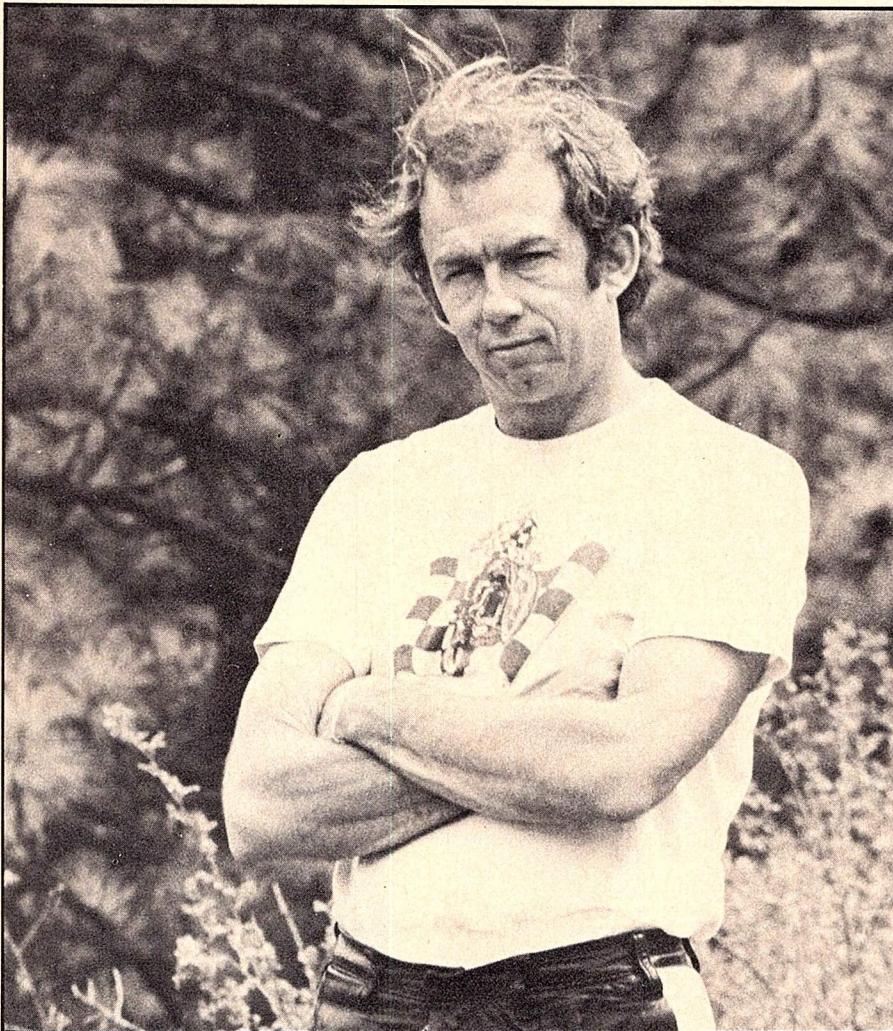


Coast Motocross Cycles
Pete Maly hangs it out on the
very potent Can-Am MX-2.
Color by Paul Boudreau.

MOTOCROSS ACTION (Sept. '75) is published monthly (semi-monthly in Sept.) by Hi-Torque Publications, Inc. with editorial offices at 16200 Ventura Blvd., Encino, California 91436. Subscriptions \$9.00 for 12 issues. Foreign \$2 additional for postage (except Canada). Copyright © 1975 by Hi-Torque Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing in this magazine may be reprinted in whole or in part without the express permission of the publisher. Manuscripts, photographs and illustrations should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The publisher does not assume responsibility for unsolicited material. Second class postage paid at Van Nuys, California 91408 and at additional mailing offices. MOTOCROSS ACTION MAGAZINE, P.O. Box 317, Encino, California 91316.

ON THE MAIN JET

By DICK MILLER



I drove 1200 miles to ride a motocross a while back. Not really unusual, you'd think — after all, I'm the editor of a motocross magazine. Well, I'm here to tell you it's the toughest thing I've ever ridden in my life, and it was only a couple minutes long. You see, it was the special test of an ISDT Qualifier held in Oregon. Actually, the motocross was easy but I wasn't ready for the rest of it.

I'm sure I'll get some letters just for telling you about it, just as I did for relating on the Score off-road race about a year ago. I happen to like to ride other events besides

motocross, and I don't think I'm being disloyal to the sport of MX because of it. Besides, every top MXer I know likes to do the same thing, so I can't be too far off; furthermore, it's my column to do with as I please. If you read further you can't say I didn't warn ya.

What started the whole thing was, is, my desire to ride the ISDT. It's been one of my goals in life — but it seems that my timing has always been a little off. When I'm ready the circumstances aren't, and vice versa. One of the Qualifiers held here in the California desert should have been an excellent opportunity for me

to earn a Gold Medal, but the lower end went out on the bike I was riding after eight miles. So much for that! The next events on the ISDT Qualifier schedule for us were the Oregon Qualifiers at Trask Mountain and Bad Rock on consecutive weekends.

If you've ever been to Oregon — and I have, many times — the first thing someone will say when you get there is, "You should have been here yesterday, it was nice and sunny." I have spent at least a couple of months cumulative time in Oregon, and I can truthfully say that for only a week of that it was not raining! This time was no exception.

When I teched the bike in it was pouring. The tech inspection was held in a big barn and then the bike was impounded in an open air corral. You needed a piece of plywood to keep the bike from disappearing into the gook where it sat overnight, uncovered. Rolling the bike into impound was even a major. You picked up about 50 pounds of adobe sod as the wheels rolled across the stuff. The weight of the bike actually kept you from falling over and acted as a ballast as you pushed it into place. Needless to say it was slippery. To say I was apprehensive about riding in it was an understatement.

The next morning, about 5:00, I looked out the window of our motel as I was getting my gear on. It was still raining, only now it seemed to be coming down harder. I can't believe the sky can hold that much rain. God, are we spoiled in Southern California!

I knew it was cold as we were driving to the impound area, because everything was fogging up, including my eyeballs. I didn't realize how cold it was until later.

As the steady stream of riders started on their allotted minutes the weather stayed the same. When it was my turn, 140 riders later, I kickstarted the bike and left the 60-foot penalty area long before my allotted minute was up. You lose points if the bike doesn't start and cross the line under its own power. As I headed across the grassy field and onto the highway out of the town of McMinnville I could feel the rain starting to sting my face. Since I had to observe the speed limit in town I was only doing about 35 mph, but about a mile out the speed restrictions ended and I started to

hook it. It's really a gas to ride an MXer with knobbies on a rainy, twisty road. On the hairpins it's just like sliding a hard track. My face really started to hurt from the rain because of the speed. I later found out it was hail, not rain.

As I followed the arrows off the end of the pavement onto a fire trail I was really getting jazzed; it was going to be fun, I thought. The trail started to wind up a mountain between beautiful ferns and large trees. Wisps of fog or clouds were drifting into the mountain as the trail climbed higher. I had only passed a couple of riders, which surprised me because I figured that I was setting a pretty good pace, and one that I expected would be a little faster than most of the other riders would be going.

On a fast straightaway section of the trail I started to overtake a slower rider, and just as I started to pass he slowed for a puddle that stretched across the road. It was muddy colored, and didn't look deep as I made a quick maneuver around his abruptly slowing bike. I had already made a split-second judgment and was reacting accordingly. Preston Petty, my good buddy and Baja teammate, had told me that the center of these puddles are the way to go through them and not to worry about them being deep. I figured he knew because he lived about ten miles away and was dialed into the area pretty well. You guessed it! This particular puddle was a little out of the ordinary. My front wheel disappeared, slowing the bike considerably. My foot hit the shift lever, knocking it into neutral, and I barely got my leg down in time to keep from falling over like the kid on "Laugh-In." My left arm went in up to the shoulder in the muddy water. As I knocked the shifter into gear I really felt stupid. I had to do away with my goggles because they were full of muddy water and steam and now my hand was starting to freeze. As I was riding along I didn't think it was that cold — until I started feeling the raindrops getting softer until they became snowflakes. Maybe this wasn't going to be so much fun after all.

When I pulled into the first gas check I was about 15 minutes early. My hands were frozen and my feet were thinking about doing the same. A lot of the pit vehicles weren't there

because they couldn't make it up the icy paved road into the checkpoint. I noticed Lars Larsson's van stuck in the side of a snow bank about a mile before the check.

Preston handed me a pair of Belstaff gauntlet gloves to go over my Tibblin MX gloves, which solved my hand problem as I headed off on the second section. I really started to feel good and was enjoying the ride again, but it was only to last about ten miles.

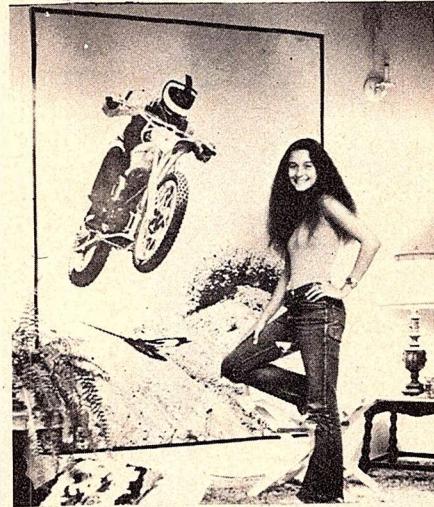
Five riders were waiting for a couple of guys who were stuck on a small uphill with a couple of grooves in it. Trying to get around what was a seemingly simple bottleneck was a complete major. The adobe mud was slipperier than ice, if that is possible. I lost about five minutes and was trying to gain them back when I came upon another bottleneck. It was on a narrow trail on the side of a mountain. Riders were backed up because of another uphill with a large tree root halfway up that spit your bike off the trail, causing it to lose traction and fall. There was nothing to do but wait and take your turn. Another 15 to 20 minutes lost, at least.

The rain was still coming down, but it varied to a drizzle once in a while and the trail was unbelievably slippery. I would be running along in third gear on some of the faster sections of trail — holding a steady throttle — and all of a sudden I would be doing 360s completely out of control. Riding on the edge of the trail was virtually impossible. The only traction was in the muddy, sloppy rut left by the preceding bikes. Most places had three grooves, one for the wheels and two for your feet. It was a real thrill going down the hills. I felt like a complete novice. The only salvation for my ego was the sight of talented riders that I knew doing the same thing. When I pulled into the second gas I was about 20 minutes late. As they were punching my card I overheard one of the officials tell the checker to keep sending riders ahead in spite of what was happening. I spent the next 15 minutes riding along wondering just what I had overheard was all about.

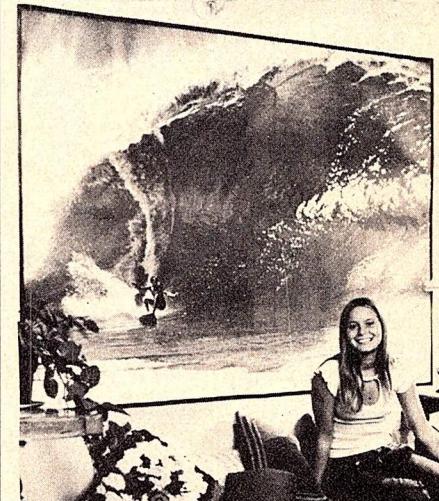
As I turned off a fast fireroad onto an uphill trail I started to pass riders coming the other way. I knew I was going the right direction because of the arrows. A few miles later, as I

continued on page 13

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It never ceases to be a source of amazement to me when I see what some people will do to finish a motocross race. You can probably trace my fascination back to the time Jimmy Weinert finished a race with Bruce Maguire after the gas cap on Weinert's CZ came off, drenching the young star with pre-mix. The kid showed remarkable tenacity. Despite being virtually a human incendiary bomb and undergoing serious discomfort from a gas-soaked T-shirt (we wore only T-shirts then), Weinert kept the pressure on Maguire till the end. East Coast boys are tough.

Then there was a report in *Cycle News* some years back about a guy who was actually *shot* during a race but went on to finish. After he complained that something had hit him in the back during the race and that it hurt, it was discovered he had been hit by a .22 cal. bullet which was lodged between two ribs. "I thought it was pretty strange for something to hit me that hard from behind," he said, "but I figured it wouldn't be the first time something bizarre like that happened during a race."

A report out of Fort Euflasia, Minnesota, told of a young hardware store clerk, Franklin Clybe, and how he was attacked and

seriously mauled by an enraged brown bear that had escaped from a zoo and was being pursued by zoo officials when it happened across the Mounds County Fairgrounds motocross track and poor Franklin. "At first I thought my spokes were coming loose, but then I realized something big and wild had hold of my bike."

The bear dragged Clybe from his motorcycle, bit and clawed him several times and left him for dead. "I laid perfectly still till the bear was gone and then I crawled back to my bike and got it going."

The bear attacked him again and chased the terrified rider as he tried to continue the race. Four times the bear caught up with Clybe, dragged him from the bike and mauled him repeatedly. Each time Clybe was able to struggle back to his bike and continue. By the end of the race Clybe was critically injured and had dropped from third to ninth. *"If it wasn't for that stupid bear I could've gotten a second or third overall,"* Clybe later said after recovering from four hours of surgery.

At Peat Moss Park, a small track near the marshlands of Ochawauchi, Florida, Carlos Zaragoza was running sixth in the Open Novice class when he overshot a berm and put his 450 Thunderbeast into a quicksand bog. Friends rushed to Zaragoza's aid but had tremendous difficulty pulling him out of danger till they found he was still holding on to his bike. "Let go of your bike so we can save you!" they called to Zaragoza.

"No!" Zaragoza yelled back. "Never! If I can finish this moto I can get enough points to tie for the lead of the Dr. Pepper Series! First prize is a year's supply of Diet Doc. Pull harder!"

Using considerable manpower and a long rope, they got Zaragoza and his 450 Thunderbeast out of the bog and he pushed across in 24th place to tie the series.

I know a guy named Ferd who was accosted by an insurance salesman while he was sitting on the starting line just before the race. "Pardon me," this guy with a briefcase shouted into Ferd's ear, "but are you and your family adequately covered in the event you should break every bone in your body during the course of this race?"

Ferd ignored him and got the holeshot. Picking his way around a

slow turn halfway through the first lap, the guy stepped out from behind a pile of tires and stopped him. "Our policy offers an excellent hospitalization plan!"

Ferd gassed it, but his concentration was blown. On the next turn he slid out. The flagman rushed up and shouted, "For only a dollar a month extra we have a plan whereby your children will receive underwear and socks every Christmas while you're disabled!"

"Get away from me!" screamed Ferd. "I don't *have* any children!"

The little guy wouldn't let him up. "Oh, then you'll want our new Individual Term Existence retirement plan. It's custom-tailored for the 'non-family' man."

"ARGH!" cried Ferd and tore himself free. The fall had cost him the lead but in a few laps he had worked his way back to the front. He started lapping slower riders and tangled with a squirrel who wouldn't let him by. The squirrel yelled back over his shoulder, "Notice in our 'Invasion from Outer Space' clause we've added disability from being struck by a meteor. No other company provides you with this protection!"

Ferd finally finished the race and won. As he was accepting his trophy, the trophy lady gave him a big kiss and whispered in his ear, "If you sign our policy today, you'll receive a free gift of stainless steel dinner ware and a special \$50 rebate." Ferd finally gave in and bought the coverage.

On the island of Knockanocke in the western Aleutians, a new hill was suddenly added to the local motocross track when a volcano erupted during the Women's Division event. Miss Olivia Iwanna won the race despite repeated attempts by the local political leaders to sacrifice her to the angry gods since she was the only virgin on the island.

Jeb Lental, a school teacher from Bismarck, North Dakota, came in second in the 250 Intermediate race at Chief Rabid Badger's Memorial Motocross Track near Medicine Bow. He accomplished this feat despite the fact his foot was caught in a beaver trap. "I would've won but the beaver kept trying to gnaw through my Full Bores," said Jeb.

And to think I once dropped out of a race because I was hit in the stomach with a 400 CZ.

WRENCH WRACING

By ARDIMOS MIERSTEDT

TERRY CABLES

I have Terry cables on my bike and I was wondering how long I should go before replacing them.

Rodney Hines
Santa Clara, California

Terry cables are made from high-quality aircraft cable and, under normal circumstances, should last indefinitely.

HUSKY FOUR-SPEED

I have a 1970 Husky 250 that is really tricked out except for one thing: it's only a four-speed. Is there any way I can add an extra gear or two? Also, where can I get a trick swingarm to move up my shocks?

Randy Hutchins
Lakeside, California

You're out of luck on the four-speed. There's no way you can add any gears and none of the five and six-speed parts are interchangeable. You could install a two-speed primary off one of those trick desert Huskys and make an eight-speed, but it would be economically impractical. Profab, 11581 Anabel Ave., Garden Grove, California 92643 makes neat swingarms for old Huskys.

MORE TM125 SPEED

I have a stock 1974 Suzuki TM125 and would like to know how to get more speed out of it and not spend a lot of money.

Kent Anzalone
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Hold the gas on longer. Either that or read the \$100 Hop-up feature in the August, 1974 issue.

ELSINOKE SWINGARM

I would like to move my shocks up on my '75 CR125 Elsie. Is it worth the 100 big ones for a Red Line

swingarm? Or would it be just as good to send my swingarm to Cycle Products West and have them do it for \$29.95? My dad can weld pretty good and has the metal. Can we do it ourselves, or is it too hard?

Steve Pokorny
Fenton, Missouri

Trick swingarms are a matter of economics. If you have \$100 to burn on the Red Line unit, by all means do it — because it's the ultimate. The factory guys use the Red Line. On the other hand, the CPW modification doesn't cost nearly as much but still gets the job done. Understand, though, the stock swingarm isn't as strong as the Red Line. If I had the choice to make, I'd do it with my dad because it would be a lot more fun and you'd feel better about it in the end. It isn't hard. Just make sure everything is the same on both sides and line it all up and do a neat job. Good luck.

HEAD MILLING

I have a '73 100 MX and I was wondering if you could tell me if you could shave the head and how much do I take off.

Vince Dimmick
Troy, Idaho

Just a little off the top and leave the sides long. Ho ho. That was a little joke, Vince ol' buddy. You can "shave" your head a maximum of .020 without getting too radical. Just make sure you check the piston-to-head clearance with some chewing gum before you try to start it.

FACTORY RACE BIKE SETUP

I would like to know how the factory racers are set up for motocross and how they get them so light.

Drew Kalafut
Ogdensburg, New Jersey

First off, the racing department gets the bike. In the case of some factories like Bultaco, Husqvarna and Maico, the bike starts off as a production unit. In the case of others like Honda and Suzuki, the bikes are specially built. The specially built bike usually has a hand-fabricated aircraft steel frame, special aluminum swingarm and a prototype engine with specially machined parts such as gears, cranks, clutches and what have you. Materials used in construction of these motorcycles are all top-quality. Gas tanks, seats and other flat parts are fabricated from aluminum. To save weight, magnesium is used to cast the engine cases, hubs and sometimes the fork clamps. Some of the Japanese bikes have magnesium carburetors. Titanium nuts and bolts are used extensively and, because of AMA and FIM rules, chrome moly steel is used in the axles, swingarm pivot bolts and handlebars. Suspension components are usually prototype items from the Japanese and European manufacturers or else factory developed proto units. It is not unusual to see outrageously trick items on these factory one-offs that you don't see on the production bikes. Bizarre case induction reed valves, solid copper cylinder heads and strangely snaking up-pipes are but a few. These special bikes are usually maintained by the local racing departments and if problems develop, the offensive parts are sent back to the factories to be dealt with. In the case of setting up a production bike for grand prix competition, it doesn't stay production for long. If the frame proves to be too heavy or too fragile, it is sent to a frame builder and he copies it with hand-crafted aircraft steel. Stock suspension units are modified to keep up with the latest developments. Steel parts that can be replaced with aluminum are so replaced. Titanium nuts and bolts are used. The cylinders are ported to the maximum, which usually means replacing the piston after every race. The porting work is done either by the factory mechanics or outside shops and their work is a fairly well guarded secret. The entire engine is taken apart and each part is carefully inspected and deburred. I've known mechanics who've spent hours and hours going over each gear with a jeweler's file making sure

continued

DIRT

By Holbert Holquist

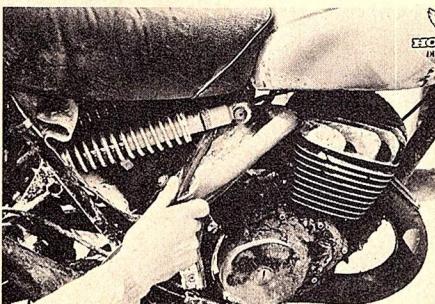


Baz thought he was eating a new model McDonald's as he checked the number on the wrapper. He said it definitely had an East German flavor but needed a little something to pep it up.

* * *

We got the word that *ABC Wide World of Sports* is going to do the Carlsbad GP again. Let's hope we don't have to wait three months again to see it. At least we got to see the last one twice because of the cancellation of another event.

* * *



Steve Weber sent us some photos from a race in Braine-Le-Compte, Belgium. He said that when he approached a Honda shop sponsored bike's mechanic and mentioned MOTOCROSS ACTION the dude whipped off the side plate and

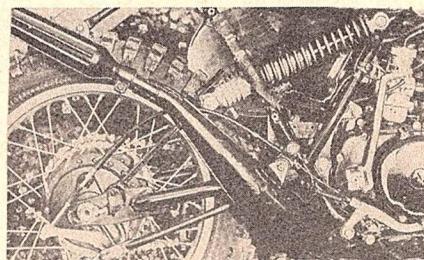
showed him their special cantilever suspension. Another guy was running a monoshocked Bultaco with a set of unsprung dampers on the rear. He also mentioned that while he was there he took in the Belgian 250cc GP and they had Gary Jones listed in the program; interesting.

* * *



Randy Carpenter sent us this clipping from the *San Diego Union* women's section about the former woman MXer, Kerry Klied. Her new name is Kerry Schroeder because of a marriage to golf and tennis pro Rick S. Kerry was one of the first women to be recognized as an MXer, but she's traded her bike for a horse and would like to compete in the Olympics. It's mighty hard to stay out of the saddle, no matter what kind!

* * *



Graham Boyce of Cambridge, New Zealand, sent us a clipping of what they have to do to the Honda

CR250s to be competitive against the "works-type" RN and RH Suzukis that are being run in their local races. Ivan Miller's their local hot-shot and Graham warned us that we may be seeing him later. Dick said that he saw Ivan in the last Trans-AMA and that he's pretty swift.

* * *

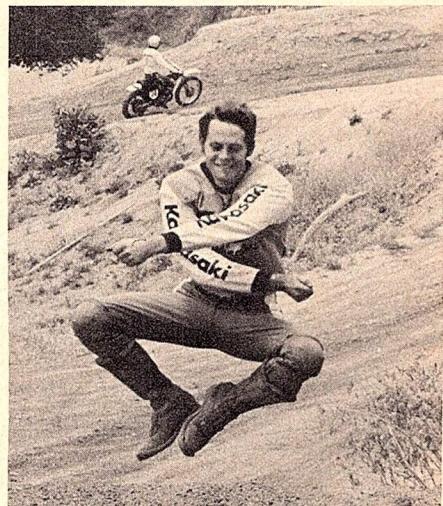
Any questions regarding the AMA's National Amateur Motocross Program should be directed to the AMA Amateur Dept. For that matter, any information you need pertaining to motocross and qualifying or racing in the Nationals or Support races should be directed to the AMA at P. O. Box 141, Westerville, Ohio 43081. If you're in a hurry call them at (614) 891-2425. You can also tell them that "Belt-drive" is doing a pretty good job as our National MX representative.

* * *



Did you ever wonder what happens to old CZ rear fenders?

* * *



Al Baker does his version of the Boudreau cross-up. Eat your heart out Baz!



"HOLY @#\$!!"

"Just the looks of this new thing are enough to scare the squids right off the course.

"The seat's chopped off. The rear fender's a mile up in the air. And the shocks are gas-filled, laid-down, and so far forward they're almost out of sight.

"What it feels like is a spring, all wound up tight, ready to explode if you so much as jiggle it.

"So I jiggled it.

"WAAAAAAAAAEEEEE!

"Oh sure, Suzuki told me that their new porting would give it a lot of snap. But this was ridiculous. We came out of the hole so fast, I just barely hung on.

"And then we hit the whoops.

"At least, they *looked* like whoops. The only thing was, the wheels didn't seem to know it. They clung to the little ones like a snake going over rocks. No matter how high the frame went, the wheels hung right in there, spitting out power.

"And over the big ones, they didn't fishtail once. We went through those whoops on a line so straight you could hang clothes on it.

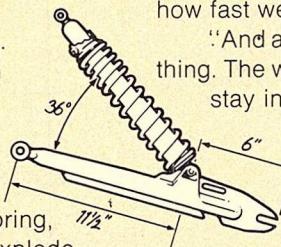
"Man, that's handling!

"Up came the first turn. A big hairy sweeper with a super-high berm.

"I tapped the gears, and slammed into it hard. Magic. Right away, it seemed to seek out and lock into the right line all by itself.

"Coming out, I cranked it on, and WAAAAAAAAEEEEE, again. We shot out of that thing like a sling shot, heading for the first jump.

"Surprise.



"We didn't stay in the air nearly as long as I thought we would, seeing how fast we were going.

"And all day long, I found the same thing. The wheels on the RM like to stay in the dirt where they can push... not in the air where they can spin.

"So if you're after a bike for show, this isn't it. This one's for win.

"And my lap time proved it.

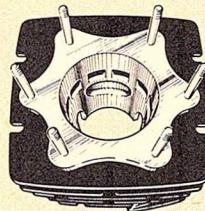
"What's its secret?

"Handling. It handles like a dream. You don't have to fight it or muscle it or make corrections all the time for goofs.

"You just flow over that course like syrup flows over pancakes.

"Competition, you're in big trouble."

"The transfer ports are so big, they put two bridges in 'em."



"This is one bike you won't have to port. Suzuki's already done it for you. In fact, they're so big, they're bridged — twice — so the rings won't get hung up. That means you've got 6 holes sucking up the gas/air mixture out of the crankcase into the combustion chamber. This new porting — plus a big, 28mm carb — gives the RM its snap and power."

U. S. Suzuki Motor Corporation, Dept. 8006
Santa Fe Springs, Calif. 90670



Ride safely: wear a helmet, eye protection and appropriate riding apparel.

SUZUKI'S RM-125 IS HERE.

MAIL ENTRIES

HERSHEY SQUIRTS

My God! What is the world coming to? Combat Wombat was bad enough, but now Road Toad? Obviously a takeoff on the common Road Load often seen following horses. And Dirt Squirt? Surely to be confused with the Hershey Squirts of Touristas, Inc., Mexico. The implications alone are stifling!

B. M. Norml
Santa Maria, California

SMOKE 'EM

Dear Sirs:

Alright, let's see a test on your great "Thermal Smoke" Yamaha shock.

Tiny
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear MXA:

Ever smoke a handlebar? When you're done riding just stick one of those funny cigarettes in the end-hole of a Wassell or whatever and inhale off the other grip. Creates sort of a wild metallic taste.

Euell Diggit
San Luis Obispo, California

(Hey, who you calling an endhole? —ed.)

MILLER'S BOOTS

Give me your boots, Miller (please).

Marion Cassidy
Pratt, Kansas

KANGAROOS TO THE STARTING LINE

Dear MXA:

There is no truth to the rumor that Aussie MXers have to fight six-foot-tall kangaroos for position on the starting line. However, there is an abundance of evidence to prove that The Bazzer is king of the bike mag columns and my vote for the 125cc Bench Racer of the Year award.

Bruce Cameron
Victoria, Australia

(But is there any truth to the rumor that Baz is a six-foot kangaroo? —ed.)

DALLAS SUPER SERIES

Dear MXA:

In your race report from Dallas Stadium, your pictures of some of the riders looked funny. Did you use a trick camera?

Bobby Bultaco
Lompoc, California

(No, Pete Szilagyi ate a Speedy Gonzalez Roosterburger just before the race and his camera hand wouldn't stop shaking. —ed.)

Hey MXA:

You guys made a horrible mistake! In your coverage of the Dallas Stadium race you said the DiStefano-Stackable crash looked like a dirty trick Czechoslovakian style. Don't you mean Russian style? What are you trying to do, give Jaroslav a bad name?

Dan Huff
Mogadore, Ohio

MOTOCROSS ACTION has the best pictures.

Matt Pfohl
La Mesa, California

(Shucks, Matt, we knew that. —ed.) (I think he's bucking for a freebee. —ass. ed.)

WEIRD MXER

Attention Editor:

Everyone in my town thinks I'm weird because I like motocross.

Mike Rankine
New London, Ohio

JOB SWAP

Ten-HUT Bazzer:

You're always saying that you're nuts about doughnuts and fritters. Well, I see 'em in my sleep! I manage a doughnut shop and I've gotta get out of here before I turn into a nutty friedcake. So I came up with this plan: LET'S SWAP JOBS! You could eat yourself into doughnutdom and I could test all those neat scoots and write "Dave's Box." Sound good?

Dave Maier
Flint, Michigan

(Yeah, but who wants to enter a contest for Dave's Doughnuts? —ass. ed.)

MX REPORT

Could you please send me a few tips for my school report? Like a few pictures and tell me who's in the pictures and what they do.

Craig Geyer
Broonall, Pennsylvania

(Don't we every month? —ed.)

PARENTS

Dear Ed.

Over the past few years, I have come to respect you immensely. Your April Mainjet response to Jimmy Willis was the icing on a somewhat lopsided cake. Personal experience usually does make a good soapbox on which to stand. I was pleased to note that you placed safety responsibility on the rider and not the bike.

I'm a girl and my mother is just like a seeing eye dog. Explaining the thrill of a motorcycle to a mother can be like falling up a flight of stairs.

BEST PHOTOS

Motocross Action:

The other day I had to get a picture of a guy on a motorcycle for school. I went through every magazine I had and I have a lot of them. I went through page by page and I came across a picture of Brad Lackey doing a cross-up in MXA's U.S. Stars and that was the best picture. That goes to show you that

Gail Koza
Dover, New Hampshire

DESERT QUESTION

Dear MXA:

This may seem an odd question for an MX magazine. I race desert and I'm looking for a new bike. I would like your opinion.

Jordy Cavanaugh
Newport Beach, California

(*You're right. It's an odd question. — ed.*)



"WHAT MEAN'UM WFO?"

DeCOSTER & WOLSINK

Dear Motocross Action:

I want to thank you for your interview with Laurie DeCoster and Anneke Wolsink. What made it so appealing was their honesty. Having been involved in motorcycling for the last four years, that was my favorite article.

Gail Tillay
Kirkwood, Missouri

Attention MXA:

Did Roger and Laurie DeCoster ever appear on a show called "The Girl in My Life," a daytime TV show? I hear Laurie is ravishingly beautiful.

Brian May
Mountain View, California

(*Yes, and yes she is. — ed.*)

Sir:

When will DeCoster go back to his world-famous cross-ups?

Tim Salmon

Northridge, California

(*When he gets the urge. — ed.*)

Dear MXA:

Don't you agree that Laurie DeCoster and Anneke Wolsink both have a dynamite set of charlies?

Jacques LaStrappe
Sweatsock, Arizona

Dear Mr. Roger DeCoster:

I presently live in Florida and was wondering how to become a factory rider for a company like Suzuki. I know that I am fully skilled for a job like this. I know a couple of guys who also might qualify. Their names are Roland Hancock, Robert Leaphart and my stupid little brother Dale. I am the best 125 racer in Florida and I think that possibly I could beat Marty Smith if I was on a bike like Suzuki.

Tell Laurie that I liked her and Anneke's article in MXA. I wish you could come to Sebring and watch me and Leaphart get into riding. We really start to get it on when Leaphart gets tired and we have to quit.

Rick Lilyquist
Sebring, Florida

Dear Dick:

Thanks a lot for all the great coverage. Anneke and I enjoyed reading it and you did a fantastic job. Roger and Gerrit even approved. Gerrit's only comment was that he hoped MOTOCROSS ACTION wasn't going to become a women's magazine. Ha!

Laurie DeCoster
Tremelo, Belgium

(*Hey, that's a great idea! — ass. ed.*)

HOT FOR RICHARD

Dear Editors:

Is it true that great looking Rich Eierstedt has a steady girl? I'm in love with him and it is essential to know about these facts so I can scheme on him. So please clue me in on Richard's love life.

Cheryl
Anaheim, California

(*My old Grandpappy used to say, "Y'ain't never gonna ketch a raccoon by settin' in a tree wishin' it'd jump in yer lap. Y'gotta go git 'im." Go git 'im, Cheryl. —ass. ed.*)

ON THE MAINJET from page 5

dropped over a rise in the trail, I came to the problem. A ledge had to be climbed that ran parallel to the trail. Together with a few other riders, I helped several bikes over it by pushing them physically. When it was my turn, the guys who had made it over had gone ahead, and the rest turned back. I was alone. I really felt like quitting, especially when everyone around me was quitting. This ledge was only seven to eight feet tall, but it was so slippery you couldn't stand up to push. Twenty minutes later I was over it with no outside help. I would gain a foot and then lose six inches of it if I lost my strength for a moment. It was incredibly tiring and I felt relieved when I finally crested it. While I was catching my breath, no more than 100 feet in front of me I saw another uphill that looked like it should be comparatively simple to get up. But, I knew that that wasn't so, because as I watched, Lars Larsson and his 250 GP Can-Am were being slowly pushed over it by three other guys. It took about 15 to 20 minutes to get over this hill, which was only about a hundred feet long, and with a minimum of three guys and a rider with the engine under power. There were about ten to 12 of us on that hill and it took at least three hours of pushing and tugging, with time out every five minutes to lie down and die. The soft, wet mud was welcome relief. I would have paid anything for a Dr. Pepper. You've no idea how long it takes you to satisfy your thirst when you're lying in the mud with your mouth open to the falling rain.

I was the last one over that hill. All I wanted to do now was to get back to civilization. My legs would hardly hold me up in the slippery grooves. I had left all remnants of strength on that hill. I really thought I was in pretty good shape prior to this fiasco. Half the Penton team was with me on the hill, plus a few more name-type ISDT riders. They weren't enjoying it any more than I was. As I pulled into the third check it was closed, so I headed out on the road that was supposed to lead back to town — hoping that I wouldn't run out of gas. I was cold, miserable, dejected, disappointed and mad. I really didn't know if I was mad at myself or what. When I reached the impound area from where this day's

continued

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Motorcycle Mechanic

If you like to ride a cycle for fun... learn how to fix it for profit! Can you imagine a better way to earn your living? And to make it even better, the pay is great—whether you choose to work in a cycle shop for someone else or decide to start your own cycle repair business. Now, thanks to North American, there's a fast, easy way to get the training you need... at home in your spare time. No need to quit school or your job. Experts show you step-by-step everything from minor tune-ups to major overhauls.

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4500 Campus Drive, Dept. FEO88, Newport Beach, CA 92663
Rush FREE "CAREER KIT" on how I can become an expert motorcycle mechanic.

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ON THE MAINJET

event had started, there was no one there. The gate was closed and only about 20 bikes were in the impound. It was still raining. I loaded the bike onto our trailer and headed for the motel.

I looked like death warmed over as I got to the door of my room. A friend of mine came up and started to ask me something, and halfway through his sentence he stopped. I was taking off all my clothes as I stood half in the doorway and half in the rain. I heard him mumble something about seeing me later as I left everything I was wearing lying on the doorstep. It must have taken 20 minutes to get all the mud out of my eyes. I've never relished a hot shower more. A few hours later I was awakened by friends who had been out to the impound. I couldn't even remember getting into bed, and they were telling me that a meeting had been held, and that anyone who wanted to ride the next day's course to complete the Qualifier had until midnight to impound their bike.

I had ridden the course until there was no more to ride and now it

continued

DIRT BIKE

MAGAZINE

Okay, you all know that a bright colored, vented DIRT BIKE racing jersey is a desirable unit. You've seen Ake win the '72 Trans-AMA one. You've seen John DeSoto wearing one in the '73 Trans-AMA.

But you couldn't get one, could you? Well, nobody could. Those were special factory prototypes. Now we have them. Regular replicas, even better than the prototypes cause these have the reinforced elbows and the DIRT BIKE logo on both sides.

Get your DIRT BIKE Racin' Jersey now, while they last.

racin' jersey

\$14.95 + 50¢ postage and handling. Please send me Racin' Jersey (s) S M L XL Enclosed is \$ check or money order

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DIRT BIKE RACIN' JERSEY MX 3-9
P.O. Box 14945 Las Vegas, Nev. 89114

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MAICO GP250
MAICO GP400
MAICO GP450

FEATURES OF THE ALL-NEW MAICO GP PUTS IT AT THE HEAD OF ITS CLASS

The new generation Maico GP is loaded with new features! It's a well known fact that Maico builds a winning machine, with more big wins this past year than ever before. Add these important new features, and you have a truly great performing motorcycle. ■ Take Maico's unsurpassed handling qualities for example, with its world famous front forks tuned to the long travel, much-copied-but-never-equalled for-

ward mounted rear shocks, and you have the BEST handling machine anywhere...at any price. ■ The horsepower of the 250's long stroke engine is now increased to 36 bhp and puts more usable traction power to the ground. Combine all this with traditional German precision craftsmanship, and you've got the best machine your money can buy! Check it out at your local Maico dealer, or write for free descriptive literature.

EAST: Maico Motorcycles, Inc. • 109 Electric Ave. • Lewiston, PA 17044

■ WEST: Cooper Motors • 110 E. Santa Anita Ave. • Burbank, CA 91502

MID-CENTRAL: Debenham Imports • Route 1, Box 211 • Antioch, Illinois 60002

Little things about people who make motocross neat

BRIAN FABRE

About two years ago when Brian was working for *Dirt Bike Magazine* as some sort of a technical editor, he came into the office one day with some funny looking aluminum widgets and a few steel washers and announced to everyone present that these little doodads would cure the gawdawful forks on the Yamaha 360 MX. We tried it out and it worked pretty good, and when Brian said he could market the kit for under \$10, we all agreed he had something there. "Yup," says Brian looking back, "that was kit number one and I've still got it in a drawer somewhere." From that first handful of widgets grew Number One Products and the "Trickit" Fork Improver Kit.



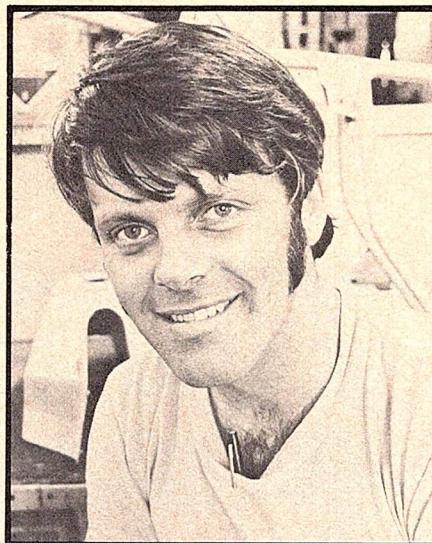
Brian's long career in the motorcycle industry — working with Cooper Motors, the West Coast Maico distributor, *Dirt Bike Magazine*, Skyway and now Number One has helped form his philosophy of developing simple, easy to install, inexpensive performance products for dirt bikes. It's thinking like this that's made "Trickit" the McDonaldburger of the fork kits.

WHIPS

BRYAN KENNEY

Nestled off in the northeast corner of Atlanta, Georgia, is the little town of Tucker. It's the home of Proline Racing, which is headed up by the very personable Bryan Kenney. His shop is a Maico and Can-Am dealership which is heavily into the modification of frames and suspension. His is one of the few shops on the East Coast that can compare to the West Coast firms like DG, FMF, Moto-X Fox and others.

Bryan's motocross career dates back to the early infancy of motocross in the U.S. He was a factory sponsored rider for several factories including Maico, Husqvarna and Yamaha.

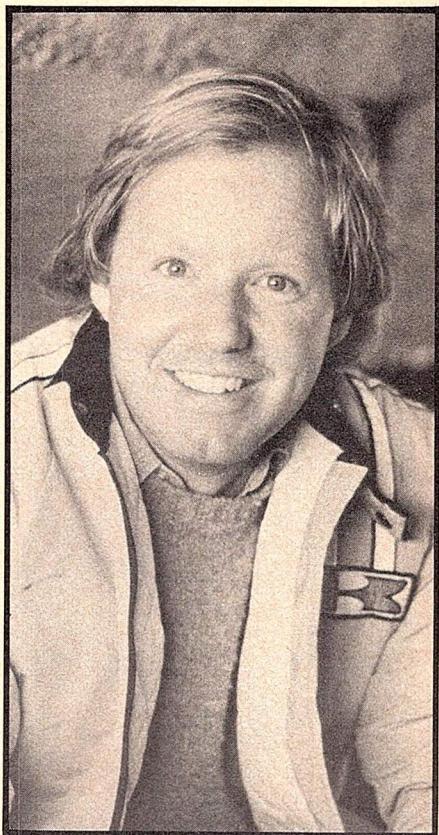


Bryan actually started competing in motocross in Europe before the sport existed in the States. In 1965 he was racing a Matchless G80 in the International events. As motocross developed in the U.S., he was the logical choice for team captain to head up the first American assault of the GP circuit. The team's best showing came in 1972 at the German 500 GP — where Bryan finished tenth to become the second American, after Bud Ekins — to ever earn a GP point.

Today, at the young age of 31, Bryan is using his knowledge of MX to advantage in his Proline shop. Every once in a while he dusts off one of his race bikes and beats it out to the local track to show the youngsters he still knows what it's all about.

DAN McCUE

Last year when we tested the Kawasaki KX250, you might say we tested the hell out of it. After its final run, a 180-mile grand prix, we brought it back to the Kawasaki public relations office with the tire worn to nothing, the grips torn off, the bars bent, the pipe bashed, the fork seals blown, a good deal of paint missing and the motor making funny sounds. Kawasaki's brand-new Assistant National Public Relations Manager, Dan McCue, was there to greet us. "What did you do to the bike?" he gasped when he saw it. "Well, we raced it a little," was our reply. "You're not supposed to race these bikes," he cried.



"What'll I tell my boss?" It was easy to tell the new guy had a lot to learn.

For our next Kawasaki test, the KX125, we took Dan with us to a session at Indian Dunes. At the end of the day Dan looked like a statue on its way to a dedication. He was covered from head to toe with a thick layer of gray mud except for a big, white grin. He had a ball with us and learned why the bikes sometimes come back a little thrashed. He also earned a great deal of our respect and we earned a little more of his.

NEW FOR KAWASAKI

THE SKUNK PIPE

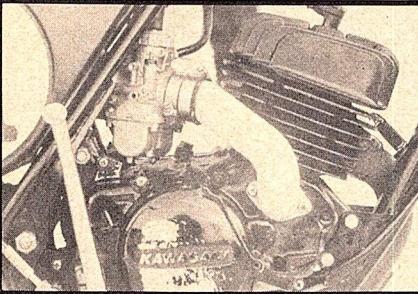
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40 STARTS - 39 WINS!

Tony Ashe - Ft. Walton Beach, FLA

175cc Class - Kawasaki F-7

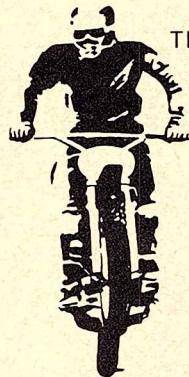
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FOR EXTERNALLY
MOUNTED CARBURETOR**RACE TESTED AND PROVEN!****ADDS HORSEPOWER**larger carburetor—packs more mixture in
improves mixing—reduces mixture temp.
boosts flow pressure—broadens power band**EXTENDS ENGINE LIFE**eliminates dirt entry at gaskets and seals
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KAWASAKIS. Kits contain all necessary
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(Fla. residents add 4% sales tax) Specify
year and model.**DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED.**SKUNK WORKS ENGINEERING,
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envelope for detailed information.**ON THE MAINJET**

didn't mean a thing. They were going to let all those guys who turned around and quit start over on Sunday and ride for a Bronze medal. I couldn't believe it. If I had quit at the first check, approximately an hour and a half's ride, I would have been in the same situation for Sunday's ride as I was for having ridden an extra six or seven more hours, not to mention the wear and tear on the bike.

To the guys who quit on Saturday and then rode on Sunday's shortened course for their Bronze medal it must have been a hollow victory. It didn't mean a thing to me. I decided to pass on Sunday's ride. I felt good on that morning as the riders headed out onto the course. No aches or pains or anything. I noticed quite a few guys I had seen turn back on Saturday leaving the line for Sunday's ride. It seemed to me a mockery of what the ISDT is supposed to be about.

I hate to quit anything if the bike still runs. If I had quit I'm sure I would have been detuned, but the fact that I didn't made the whole experience more meaningful to me than any medal.

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& RESERVATIONS.....****C. D. SMITH****INSTRUCTOR**

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Because we don't build them like everyone else"



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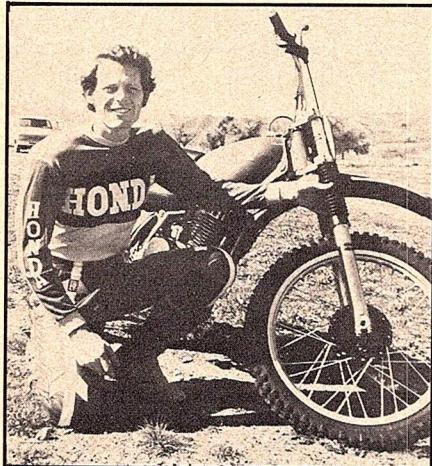
Send \$1.00 for new J&R catalog and decal.

TRICKS FROM THE TRADE



GUMBALL WIZARD

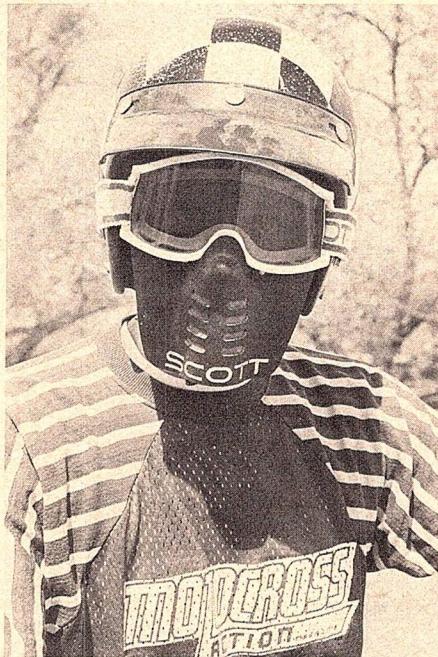
Due to rising penny gum costs, this machine will rapidly vanish and may appreciate in value. It's the real thing: HD steel and glass. \$39.95 plus \$5 postage for each machine. Gum not included. Ten-day money-back guarantee. C&T Enterprises, Dept. D-44, P. O. Box 68495, Oak Grove, Oregon 97268. Wouldn't it make a blowmind terrarium?



CR250 FORK KITS

Produced and directed by Al "Straight Arrow" Baker and S&W Engineering, this kit, incorporating

a special reed valve damping unit and S&W spring, provides the CR250 Honda Elsinore with eight inches of nicely controlled travel. For a complete description of how this kit works, see MXA, January '75. Cost is \$59.50 for the dampers and \$14.95 for the springs plus \$2 for shipping. That's a bunch, but it's good stuff. Al Baker R&D (Racing & Development), 15174 Raymer St., Van Nuys, California 91405.



PUSS PROTECTION

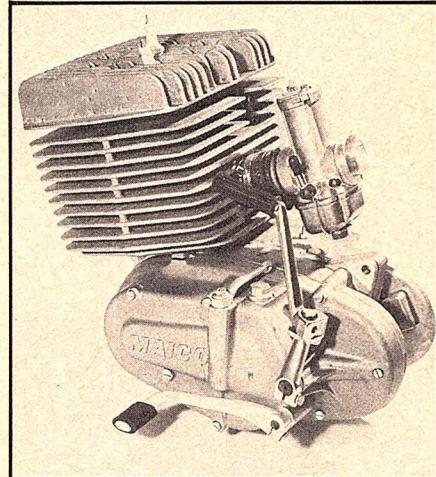
From the Scott people who make the trick goggles comes this face protector you simply snap onto your Scott goggles. Looks bogus but it does the job. Check it out at your dealer's.



SQUEEZER

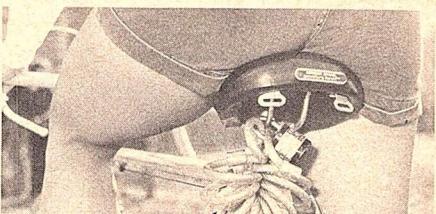
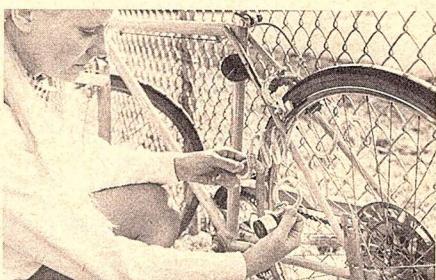
Exercise your hand grabbers with this Hand Helper from CMS Products, Inc., 2134 Old Middlefield Way, Mt. View, California 94043; (415) 961-2446. Made of plastic and stainless steel, it's adjustable by

means of elastic bands for tension and a spacer for small hands. Routine exercise with this unit can help relieve "Morning Armpump," that most-dreaded of motocross afflictions.



THE MIGHTY FIVER

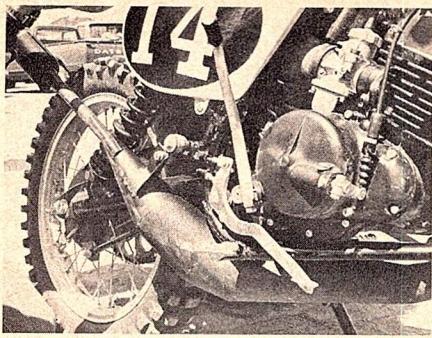
Want to put some life into that old Maico chassis? Try this 501cc engine now available from Maico Motorcycles, Inc., 109 Electric Ave., Lewistown, Pennsylvania; (717) 242-0356. Comes complete with 38mm carb, pipe, coils and mounts for around \$600. Fifty-two horses, anyone?



SECURITY CABLE

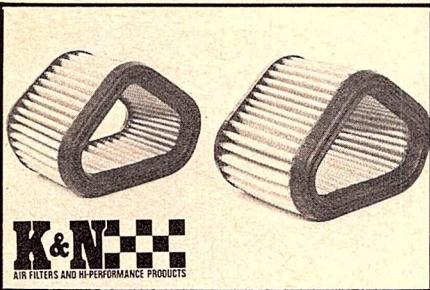
If you're going to be leaving your bike or something hanging around outside and you want to lock it up, this six-foot, 3/16-inch, self-coiling steel cable may come in handy. Every crook knows that a cable is a booger to cut through. It weighs only nine ounces and has a loop on each end so you can use your own lock, since they don't include one. Called a "Kobrakoil," it's from Loos & Co., Pomfret, Connecticut 06258. (YEA, CONNECTICUT!)

continued



RN125 GASSIT KIT

Suzuki is offering a hop-up kit consisting of a trick barrel, 30mm carb, different ignition black box and radical pipe for the new RN125. As usual, more top end power is delivered at the expense of mid-range grunt. With the five-speed, you'll be cutting it pretty close. Check it out at your Suzuki dealer.



MONOCROSS AIR FILTERS

K&N makes the only replacement air filters for Yamaha's YZ Monocross bikes. You wash them in soap and water and spray on trick oil from an aerosol can. They're supposed to work pretty good and last a fairly long time. Get 'em at your dealer or from K&N Engineering, Dept. MXA, P. O. Box 1329, Riverside, California 92502.



HIGH LEVEL SWAP

Loved and respected Terry Tiernan, former VP at Yamaha International, turned in his key to the executive washroom and headed

for the thundering halls of Norton Triumph. "I first learned to race on a great, old Matchless, so my affection for British bikes goes back a long way." Good luck, Tiernan, and don't forget: it's up for first.

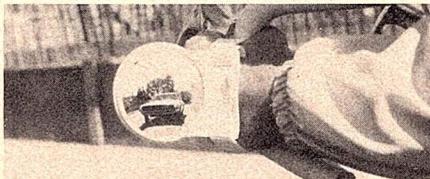
YE OLDE CATALOGUE

The Taylor catalog, stressing "Old Fashioned Quality," has a lot of neat things in it for your van or mini-truck as well as a few items for your bike. Worth looking into for a dollar. Taylor Enterprises, 7642 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Dept. MXA, San Diego, California 92111.



IT'S A HUFFY

For you bike-o-cross grannies who can't quite get the hang of those gall durn two-wheelers, try this "Tri-bike" from The Huffman Manufacturing Co., Dept. MXA, 7701 Byers Road, Miamisburg, Ohio 45432.



TEN-SPEED REAR-VIEW

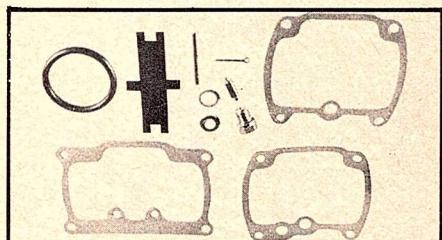
Wide-angle mirror mounts directly to your hand so you get to

see the car before it runs you over. Comfortable strap replaces knuckle screws on earlier models. Manufacturer claims it is also a useful device for people who must use wheelchairs. \$3.95 postpaid from Mar-Shel Supply Co., 7235 North Albany Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60645.



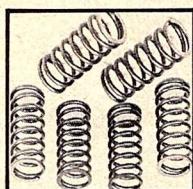
TRANSPORT IN COMFORT

These luxury buckets for your van feature 360-degree swivel, folding arms and sliding adjustment. Made from a tubular steel frame and quality vinyl, nylon and foam. The ultimate in Western decadence from Karvan International Inc., 1024 So. Linwood Ave., Santa Ana, California 92705.



CARB REBUILD

Lakewood Cycle has these carb rebuild kits that fit all Keihin and Mikuni carbs. Each kit comes with all the gaskets, O-rings and seals you'll need, plus a special needle and seat. Lakewood Cycle, Dept. MXA, 4701 Spring Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44131.



CLUTCH SPRINGS

If your 125 Honda seems to be losing power, it may be because your stock clutch springs are getting tired and the clutch is slipping. DG Performance Specialties, 1230 West Collins, Orange, California 92666, offers a set of high-quality, heavy-duty clutch springs for \$6.95. III

By Jim Russell

Just 11 miles south of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, is a place called Fort Necessity (where a force of French and Indians beat George Washington and his Virginians in 1754), and as you travel ten more miles further south on your way to Appalachia Lake Motocross Park, West Virginia, you cross the Mason-Dixon Line. If you miss a turn or two, you'll end up at either Turkey Knob, Accident, Swollen Falls, Friendsville, Romney (one of the most fought-over prizes of the Civil War; it changed hands 56 times), or Cumberland, where Washington reviewed U.S. troops being sent to Whiskey Rebellion trouble spots.

I'd been driving all day and half the night, from South Carolina. Driving up into mountains and clouds, then driving down the other side and out of the clouds — my ears were continually popping when I arrived at Appalachia Lake, West Virginia, a part of the country I had never seen before. "This can't be a motocross course . . . it's too nice and impressive to be a motocross course."

Your eyes rest comfortably upon an unbelievable and never before seen display of attractive facilities for the conglomerate of cyclists arriving with an array of bikes, women and large, longhaired dogs. The track is conveniently and most attractively located within a valley surrounded by mountains. Appalachia Lake, West Virginia, is a really "far-out memorial" constructed to enhance that ever-lovin' sport of motocross. Betty and Ralph Harbough have opened up their land and recreational park to cycling, and Dave Coombs has put it all together. It makes you feel good. You feel inside that "this must be what the motocross courses look like in the mountains of Europe."

Jimmy Weinert felt good, too. "Wait'll you see my new threads for the Trans-AMA Series." The track was conditioned with a perfect blend of straw and sawdust, twisting for a mile and a half through natural springs and hillsides with tricky off-camber turns. Ranking as the youngest American motorcycle professional to ever hold the title of National Champion (125cc), Marty Smith felt it was an "excellent course when not muddy."

250cc NATIONAL

Yamaha's "Jammin' Jimmy" Weinert muddled his way to an overall over Stackable and Grossi on a track that looked like a golf course . . . before it rained



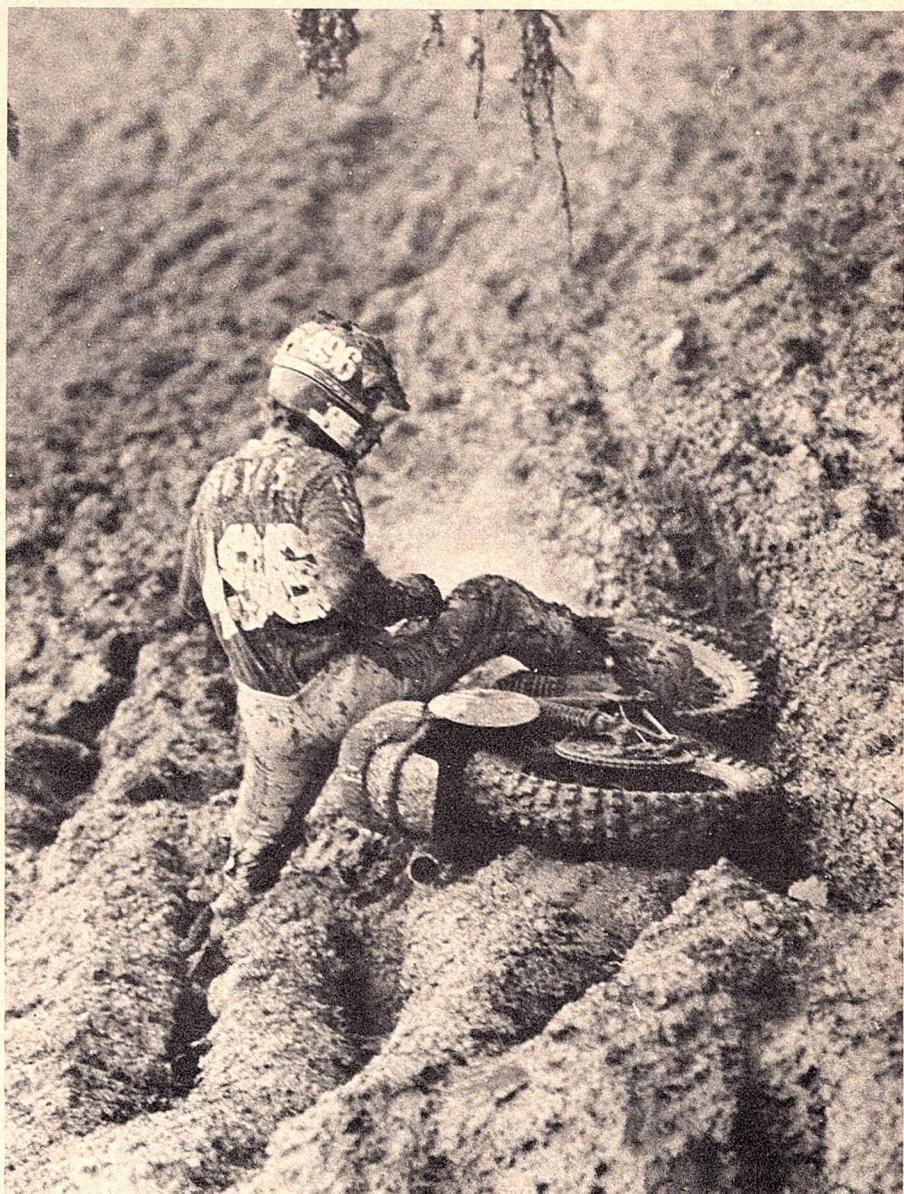
WEST VIRGINIA

It rained all Saturday night, with no sun on Sunday to help dry out the course. Steve Stackable (even though he favors the bigger bores) and Pierre Karsmakers brought the crowd to their feet by running faster than anyone else on the muddy and slippery track during practice.

Weinert started off by winning the first qualifier. Can you believe that? Jimmy Weinert scored more points than any other professional rider last year, was the U.S. Open Champion, but yet had to qualify to compete in this 250cc National. So did Pierre Karsmakers, Marty Smith and Gary Semics. Only the top 20 in the previous year's 250cc standings and the top ten thus far this year were spared running the extra qualifying moto.

Weinert followed Mickey Boone in the early part of the first qualifying moto, but eventually passed the stylish rider to win the ten-minute moto with a 30-second advantage. Part-time skier, trail rider and former full-time Husqvarna rider, now converted to full-time Kawasaki rider, Gary Semics (with his own banner-waving cheering section) demolished the second qualifying moto. Pierre Karsmakers finished third.

In the first moto, last year's 250cc Trans-AMA winner, Kent Howerton, grabbed the holeshot. He was first out of the slippery first turn and first to charge up an even more slippery first hill, followed closely by part-time model Marty Tripes, Gary Semics, Trophee des Nations rider Tony DiStefano, Billy "Sugar Bear" Grossi and Pierre Karsmakers. Jammin' Jimmy was WFO in an all-out effort to make up for an 11th starting position. As the first of the two 40-minute-plus-two-laps motos wore on, Kent Howerton blew a front tire and Marty Tripes (when Marty is in the right frame of mind, no one can beat him, not even Gary, according to Don Jones) grabbed the lead for a few laps, before having to pull off with a busted counter sprocket. Billy Grossi, Pierre Karsmakers, John Savitski, Steve (Short) Stackable and former 125cc rider now converted to 250cc Jimmy Ellis were all (Weinert was still WFO) conferencing heavily as to who did want mostest the top five finishing positions for the first moto. Grossi fell four times, Ellis stayed on, and Stackable fell three times. Weinert only fell once, and managed

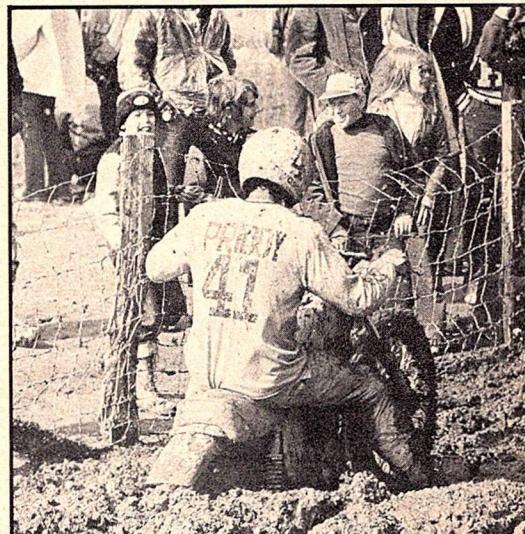


Mitch Mayes goes for the ultimate berm.

to win the moto, with Ellis second, Stackable third, Grossi fourth and Savitski fifth.

Weinert's ride was excellent in the first moto even though he did complain about mistakes (only noticeable by him). He wasn't alone. Pierre wasn't at all happy about not having enough pulling power for these West Virginia hills, nor was he pleased about re-injuring his knee. Marty Smith pitted twice (busted shift lever and goggle cleaning). Mickey Boone blew a chain and motor, and Kent Howerton was not at all pleased with a ninth place finish due to a flat front tire.

The first moto was dynamite — the second moto was TNT. Billy Grossi and Steve Stackable played

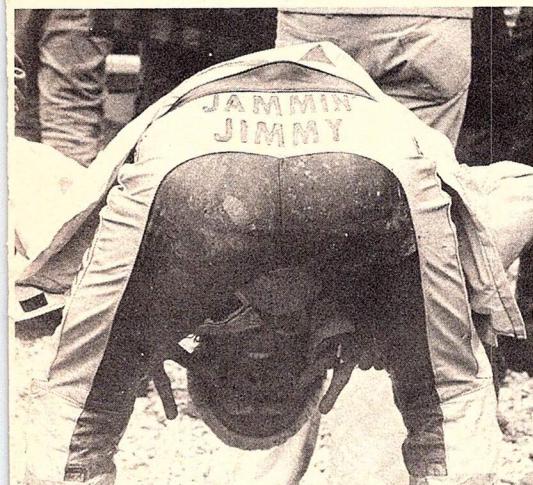


WEST VIRGINIA



It was everyone for himself in the first couple of turns. It was hard to believe that such a beautiful track, before the skies opened up, could deteriorate so much.

Pierre tries out his trick bionic shin.



Weinert's new leathers.



It always seems muddy spectators enjoy muddy riders more than muddy riders enjoy muddy tracks.

"pass each other" every two or three laps, while Weinert played for a cool second and overall win.

Tony DiStefano grabbed the second moto holeshot. Billy Grossi passed DiStefano three and a half laps later for the lead, then Stackable took over from Grossi one and a half laps later. Weinert was again going WFO to overcome another poor starting position. Grossi regained the moto lead several laps later after having mastered a problem mudhole by simply going berserk through it. Literally berserk. He would bounce from handlebars to rear fender as he blasted through. It was a real problem and slowing force for everyone else. Stackable ate it twice in that same hole.

As Stackable and Grossi switched roles in their "follow the leader" dice, Weinert was jammin'. When he caught Stackable they both blew by Grossi with only a few laps remaining.

Weinert knew second place was enough to win overall and Stackable was hoping Grossi would pass Weinert, thus giving him the overall win. Billy tried. The moto ended with Stackable, Weinert, Grossi, DiStefano and Semics finishing in that order. A hell of a race!

There are some rumors that Axton, Virginia, an upcoming National, is even better. That's hard to believe compared to Appalachia. If it is better, Axton must "walk on water."

The 250cc and Open class Nationals are unique this year. All the "heavyweights" are riding both classes — and they are heavy! The competition is really fast. A lot of "go-fast" American riders are getting "psyched" for the 1975 Trans-AMA.

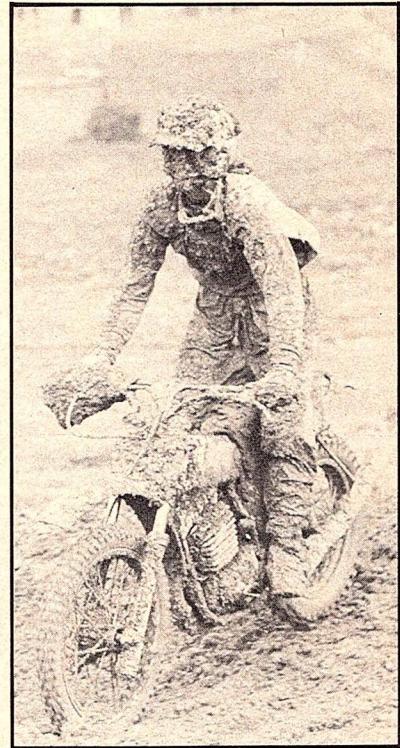
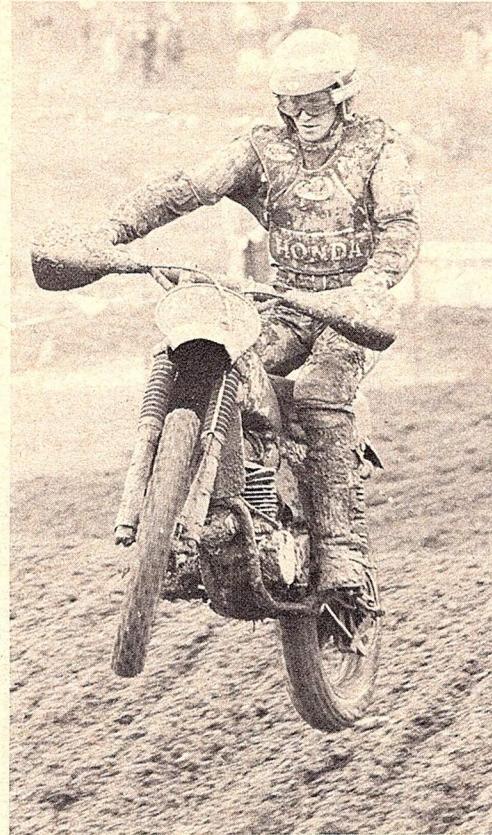
Karsmakers split for Holland right after the event to check out his first child, a boy, that he and his wife christened Jarno.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

Steve Stackable blasted through the West Virginia muck to second overall.

Color by Jim Russell

Did anybody get his number? Just think if you were supposed to.



Bill Grossi and his new Grand Prix model Suzuki had no problems with the mud.

RESULTS Bruceton Mills, West Virginia

250cc National MX

1. Jim Weinert (1/2)	Yamaha
2. Steve Stackable (3/1)	Maico
3. Bill Grossi (4/3)	Suzuki
4. Tony DiStefano (7/4)	Suzuki
5. John Savitski (5/7)	Bultaco
6. Pierre Karsmakers (6/9)	Honda
7. Mike Kessler (8/10)	Husqvarna
8. Kent Howerton (9/11)	Husqvarna
9. Rich Thorwaldson (10/14)	Maico
10. Jimmy Ellis (2/22)	Can-Am
11. Mike Runyard (15/12)	Can-Am
12. Gary Chaplin (14/17)	CZ
13. John Ayers (18/15)	Husqvarna
14. Gary Semics (30/5)	Kawasaki
15. Wyman Priddy (23/13)	Kawasaki

125cc Pro Support

1. Jon Leak (1/2)	Yamaha
2. Denny Swartz (3/1)	Yamaha
3. Robert Yost (4/3)	Honda
4. Richard Heagy (5/5)	Honda
5. David Bowman (6/8)	Honda

WEST VIRGINIA





(Photo by Tom Corley courtesy of
Southern California Motocross)

RACE TEST

A magnificently advanced race bike with enough power and grace to murder the competition



It seems every time a good bike comes along for us to test we have a hard time keeping from screaming to the world that this is the best bike ever. After testing so many fair to middlin' machines, a hot one will have no trouble blowing us away. We have been so affected by various Maicos, CZs, Husqvarnas, Bultacos and a Penton or two, to name a few. Now, with only three years of production under their Gold Belts and the last generation of motocross machines thankfully swept under the carpet, Can-Am joins the ranks of the blow-away bikes with their newly designed MX-2 series. It is, therefore, with a great deal of restraint that we bring you this test.

Rarely does a racing machine combine power and handling like the MX-2 250. Usually a really fast bike will be a little more difficult to control because of the load a powerful engine will put on a frame or the side hop a spinning rear wheel tends to generate. Or else a really good handling bike comes on a little slow because designers know soft power makes the bike easier to control. The 250 Can-Am gives no quarter in either department. Power flows abundantly from the unique five-port rotary valve engine, with all the boost coming in the mid-range and top end just as it should be on a race bike. There's enough off-idle torque to carry you into the powerband in any gear and the valved intake makes it virtually impossible to load up.

The MX-2 never showed any signs

of being a hard starter. It fired on the first or second kick every time, even when dead cold in the morning. Except, that is, when somebody monkeyed with the kill button. The switch is an on-off affair: Push it once and it's on, push it again and it's off, push it again and it's back on. No problems till you realize that, despite what the owner's manual says, there's no way of telling when it's on and when it's off. We spent many kicks on a turned-off engine. Trouble is, after five or so kicks when the kill switch becomes suspect, you give it a poke and try starting it again but by this time the plug is soaked and you really don't know whether you're on or off. So, although this is a good switch because you only have to hit it once in an emergency to shut everything down, it could hang you up in a non-emergency.

Once started and running clean, the Can-Am 250 puts out more than enough power to get the job done. Our test riders compared it to the Penton 250 and Ossa 250 for sheer output. The powerband is extremely broad, coming on well down in the mid-range and carrying a usable distance beyond the normal shift point. That means that in a short straight situation you can avoid a shift by revving the hell out of it, without worrying about some hot-shot stinging you with another gear on his Elsinore. In fact, just when you think it's going to run out of beans, lean back and you'll *wheelie* in any gear. This kind of

CAN-AM MX-2 250

Photos by Paul Boudreau, Dick Miller and Tom Corley

power not only blows test riders away, it does the same to the competition.

Coming out of a turn with the throttle to the pin moves the Can-Am forward with swift authority. New riders found the old "use the next higher gear" trick came early while gaining confidence on the MX-2, while show-boats who like to wheelie out of corners were a little chicken to try their tricks. Once the front end starts coming up, it comes up *fast*. This bike, in other

words, is a business machine.

There was, however, a little demon in the motor that showed its face every once in a while. Sometimes, just as the throttle was cracked open, the engine would give a wicked power surge that took the rider completely by surprise. We felt this was a function of the low-speed jetting being a little heavy. When the slide hit a clean spot the motor would take a jump just to make sure the rider was awake. The truly awake rider will tune it out with a

smaller pilot jet.

Any time you have a bike as powerful as the Can-Am, it damn well better handle. If it doesn't, all the power in the world is no good because you can't hang on to it. The Can-Am wraps its potent mill in a wondrously rigid frame that handles like a computer: It goes only where you point it. Unwanted side trips, swaps, slaps and the foot-wide line are not matters of concern. Straight as a beam you can drill your way around the hairiest track without



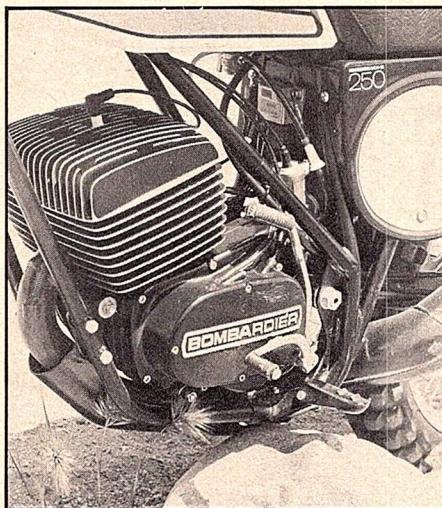
thinking twice about the status of your insurance policy. Holes, bumps and ruts that spell treachery for lesser bikes become escape routes for the Can-Am. Plus, the MX-2 possesses an almost magical ability to steer through the most gnarly of turns at astonishing speeds without ever giving the rider any indication that all is about to endo.

The true worth of a bike's handling prowess comes to light in that one tight turn usually located at the bottom of an outrageously lumpy downhill. The dedicated racer comes into this turn without any semblance of control whatsoever. It's a situation where you toss the whole enchilada to your machine and say, "Take it, bike." The Can-Am takes it with class. Hands popping off the bars, feet flying in the breeze, not a prayer for recovery and the Can-Am swings through the turn without a twitch. If you keep your wits about you, you can even remember to wick it on just at the right time and make the whole thing look like you planned it that way. An occurrence like this would leave most riders blanched with fear on the next approach, but on the Can-Am you try it again, only faster.

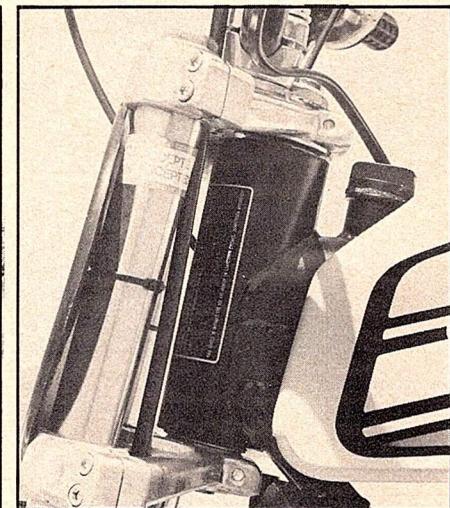
On the straight stuff, no matter how nasty, the Can-Am lets you use all the power. You gain incredible confidence because the MX-2 refuses to let a hard hit send it sideways. It just keeps boogying. When you finally get to that ledge technology hasn't found an answer for yet, the one that would derail a locomotive, and you try to take it in the normal balls-to-the-wall mode, the resulting hop startles the hell out of you — but you're back in control again before you've had time to get scared.

The method to the Can-Am's superb handling comes from a frame cut a bit different from most bikes. Virtually every other bike has its engine cradle running from the steering head under the engine to the backbone at the seat/tank juncture with a strut running to the top shock mount, or else the cradle will run to the top shock mount and the strut will go to the backbone. The Can-Am starts with a very large diameter backbone like the sweet handling AJS's of a few years ago that starts the frame off on a rigid platform. Two tubes come down from the steering head in the conventional double cradle, run under the engine and return straight

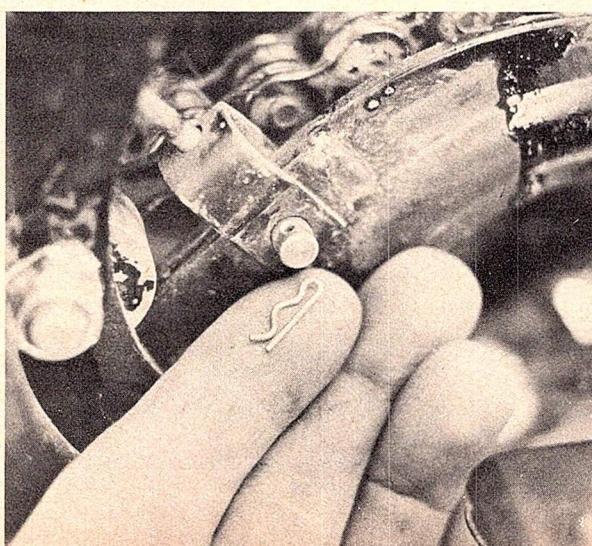
MX-2 250



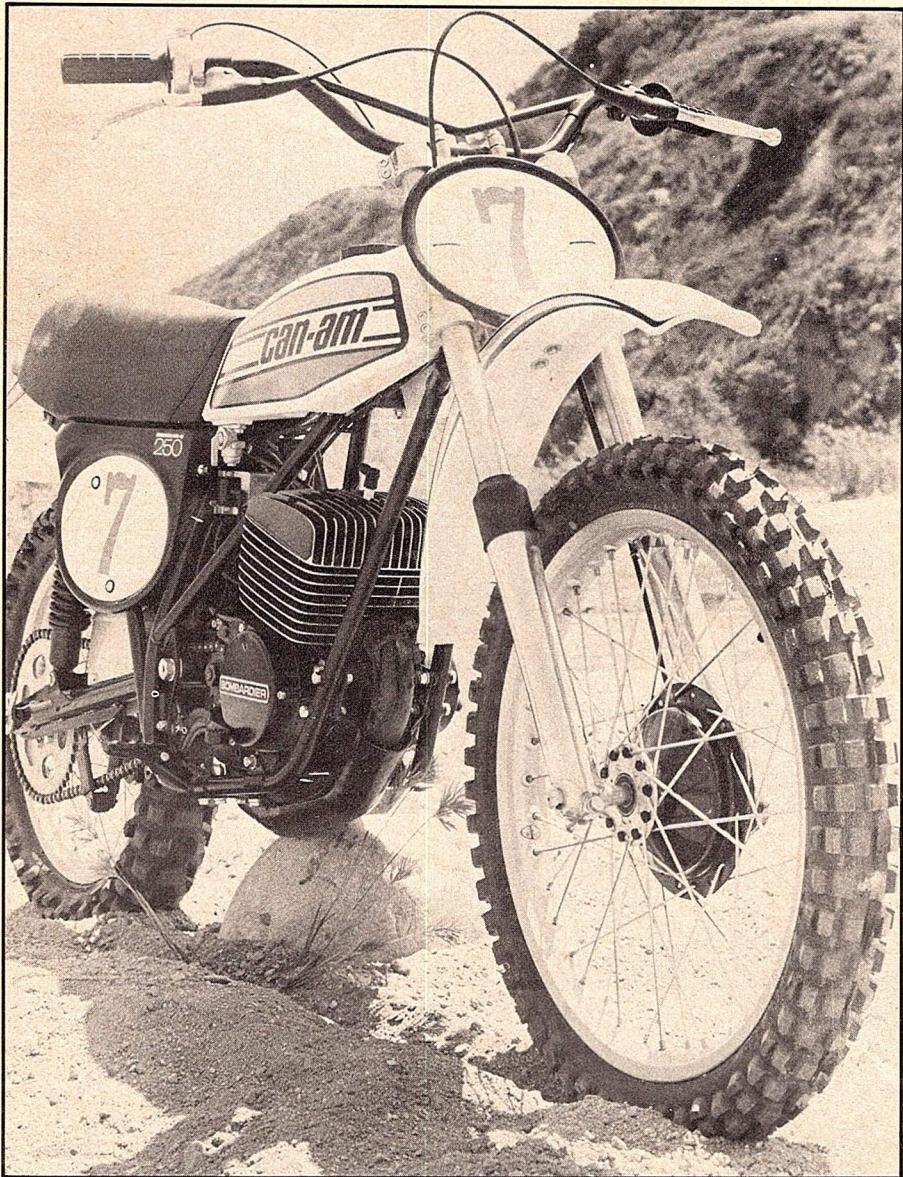
Rotary valve motor is hot. Frame member going under the tank is one of the secrets to the Can-Am's excellent handles.



By interchanging cones in the steering head you can vary the fork angle in half-degree increments from 25 to 31 degrees.



Rubbing the brake cable pin with your boot causes the clip to fall out. Fastener should be wired or taped.



Beautifully detailed magnesium hubs keep weight down; skid plate protects pipe but keeps weight up. Forks are short, fenders don't return if folded under.

be a little heavy, which the MX-2 is. At 225, it's ten to 15 pounds over some of the competition. Can-Am says they could've made the weight much more competitive by using aircraft chrome moly steel for the frame, but chose mild steel because it was less expensive and less prone to cracking. That's good thinking.

Unsprung weight is kept down by using magnesium alloy for the hubs and brake plates. Engine cases and side covers are also die cast magnesium alloy. Plastic is used for the tank, fenders, side covers and air box, but the compound isn't right and parts like the side covers and rear fender started cracking on our test bike after a couple of weeks (and a crash or two). The seat is aluminum based, very strong and very light. There are hardly any places to save weight so you're stuck with what you buy. No problem, though, since the Can-Am's power and grace recoup the weight disadvantage.

If we were to pinpoint any one shortcoming of the Can-Am, it would have to be the suspension as we tested it. The six-inch stroke of the Betor front forks is smooth and well controlled, but a little on the short side of its seven- and eight-inch competition. The rear S&W shocks provided excellent damping, but most test riders agreed the springs were too stiff. Can-Am offers the solution to any suspension adjustment needs with four optional fork springs and seven optional shock springs. We chose the 88-pound shock spring to replace the 100-pound stocker and gained a much softer, more comfortable ride.

You can also vary the fork angle from 25 to 31 degrees to suit your needs, although we found that the stock 30-degree setting worked excellently for motocross.

Hardware on the bike is quality. Jones chrome moly handlebars resist bending even after repeated impacts. Magura Power Levers and quick turn throttle provide fine control. Yokohama knobs offer excellent traction and steering. D.I.D rims and chain are hard to beat. Bosch capacitor discharge ignition worked flawlessly throughout the test.



up to the rear of the backbone. A set of struts then goes to the shock mounts and a second set of struts goes to a point midway along the backbone just below the tank. This arrangement makes for very short

tube sections between brace points which help contain the flexing moments in the frame. That means you can gassit without getting out of shape.

It also means the bike is going to

MX-2 250

The air filter, a foam unit, sits right under the seat and feeds a huge plenum air chamber that provides a high volume intake area for the 32mm Bing. In its position the filter is away from dirt and water and is easy to service.

Rear brake felt good and didn't lock up the engine, but the front binder felt spongy and required a lot of effort to put G's on the front wheel. Both brakes went away considerably when wet. We traced the wet problem and the squashy front to improperly mated braking surfaces. Only about half of the front brake shoes were contacting the drum when applied. These units must be inspected and if found to be out of true, brought back to the dealer for adjustment.

Our test bike came through with a nut cross threaded on an engine mount bolt and had to be replaced.

A clip pin holding the rear brake cable to the pedal can be worked loose by the rider's boot and should be taped.

At first we felt the seat/tank juncture was too wide to impart a good feeling of control when sliding forward for a turn. Most bikes are about five inches wide at this point but the Can-Am is seven inches and tended to spread the rider's knees slightly. It was later discovered that the tank was as wide as the cylinder cooling fins and kept the rider's knees from banging into the engine. Good point.

The Can-Am MX-2 is oil injected,

a system of lubrication we're not overly enthusiastic about. The prime danger of oil injection is failure. Failure of the pump, oil lines, drill holes, control cable, or more likely, failure of the rider to fill the tank will lock an expensive engine solid. Can-Am points out, however, that they've experienced no mechanical failures with the system and the in-frame oil tank holds two quarts — which is easily good for a day's riding. The goal of Can-Am's oil injection system is to prolong the life of the engine, and since it meters undiluted oil to the main bearings and other moving parts, it must surely do that. As for upper end lubrication, we checked the cylinder after a four-week test and found the rings to be within tolerance and the cross hatch still visible in the liner.

There're a lot of good points about the Can-Am, products of a racing and development program tied closely with the production of a common man's motocrosser. The Canadian industrial giant, Bombardier (bom-bar-dee-a), has struck median ground between Japanese technology and European craftsmanship. The result is a magnificently advanced racing bike with enough power and handling to murder the competition, and all falling sweetly on the American palate for smooth castings, clean lines, trick parts and pretty paint. To our way of thinking, you can't do better.

SPECIFICATIONS

Make Can-Am
Model MX-2 250
Country of Manufacture Canada
Suggested retail price \$1375

ENGINE

Type .. Two-stroke sgl., rotary valve
Bore & Stroke 74mm x 57.5mm
Displacement 247cc
Compression Ratio 13.5:1
(uncorrected)
Cylinder Five-port, iron sleeve
Carburetion 32mm Bing
Ignition Bosch electronic CDI
Lubrication Oil injection
Air Filter Foam

TRANSMISSION

Type Five-speed
Ratios 2.38, 1.75,
1.39, 1.095, 0.913
Primary Gear, wet clutch
Ratio 2.91
Drive Chain D.I.D TM520

SUSPENSION

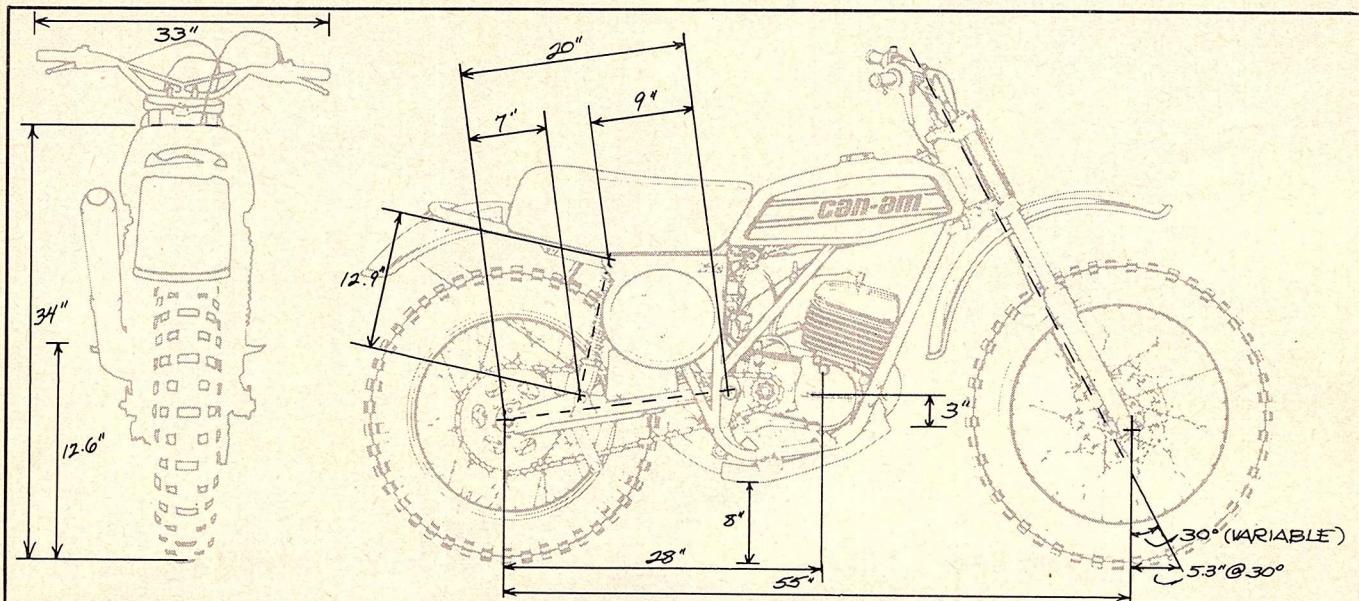
Front Betor hydraulic sliders
Rear S&W shocks
Travel:
Front 6.2 inches
Rear 5.8 inches

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase 55 inches
Ground Clearance 8 inches
Seat Height 34 inches
Track Weight 225 pounds
Weight Bias 44% front, 56% rear

CAPACITIES

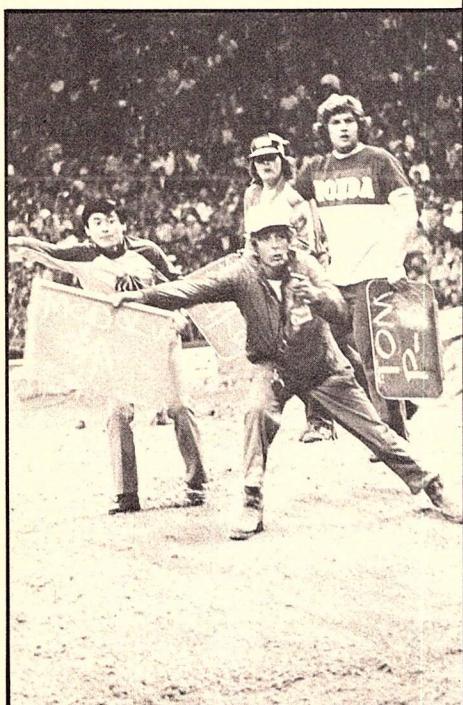
Fuel 1.9 gallons
Transmission 1200cc
Forks 200cc



PERSONALITY

Working for a large company and traveling around the country on company business, oftentimes a person's path will cross that of a fellow employee traveling around the same country on the same company's business. Such was the case when Mr. H. Ohta, Marketing Research and Product Planning Department representative for U.S. Suzuki, showed up at the opening round of the Yamaha Super Series at Dallas Stadium. Mr. Ohta, visiting Suzuki dealers in the Dallas area, offered his services to Brian Lunniss, mechanic for U.S. Suzuki and Billy Grossi, in whatever capacity he could. Brian pointed out to Mr. Ohta that the event had been well planned and that all positions were covered. Not wanting to miss the opportunity to bolster a team effort for the home office, Mr. Ohta replied with a big smile, "Then I will cheer!" At evening's end there was no doubt in anyone's mind that the all-time Grand Prix cheerleader was Mr. H. Ohta. II

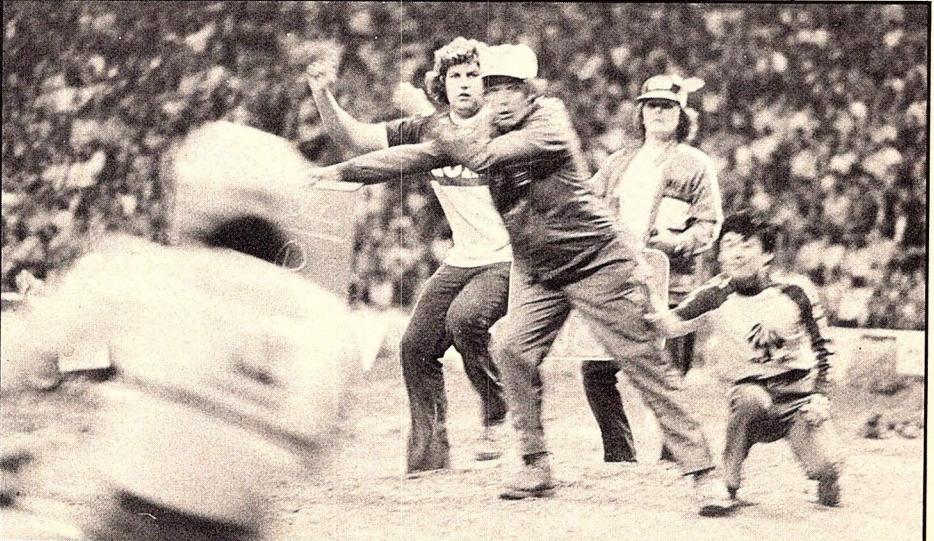
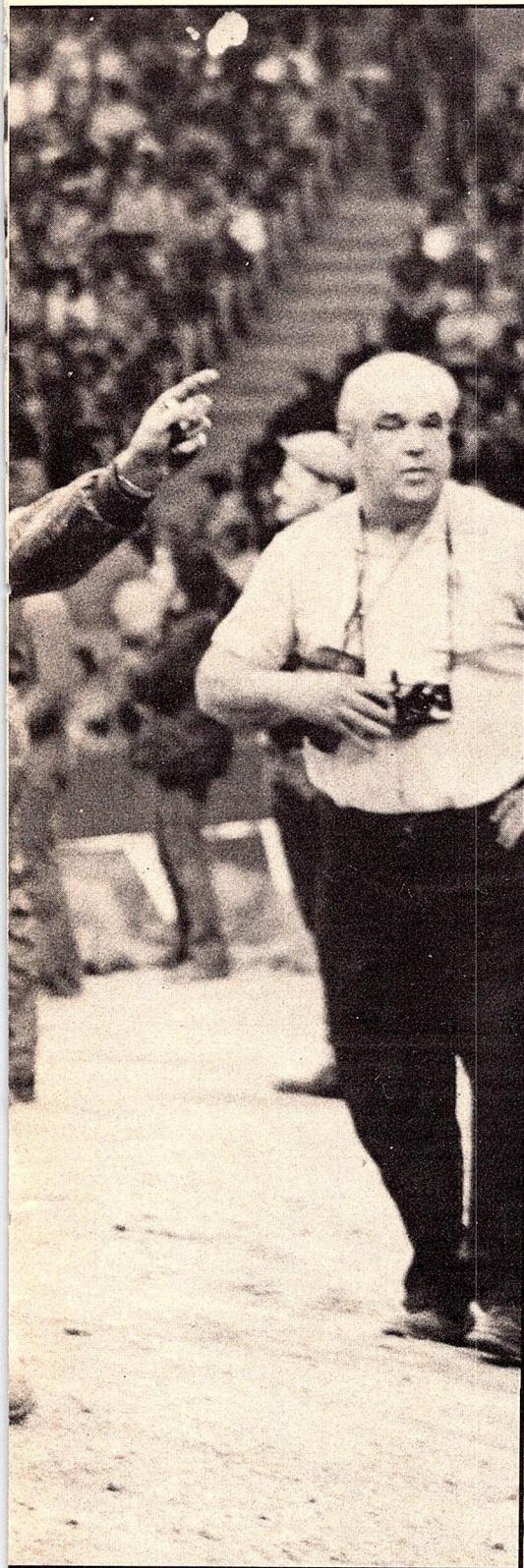
***Mr. Ohta
joins Team
Suzuki for
a company
effort***



THE CHEERLEADER



Photos by Paul Boudreau



By Gunnar Lindstrom

When the new RM125 was introduced a while back, we found that the factory had not installed any oil injection on this pure racer. That kind of confirmed that if racing a TM is your thing, removing the oil injection is not an improper thing to do. So we simply called up the nearest Suzuki shop and asked them if they wanted to show us how to do it. "No problem, just come right over, we're doing about two or three a week," was the answer. We got some film and notepaper, loaded up

and headed for Suzuki Van Nuys. Rocky Morrisson's shop has converted over 100 TMs during the last three years and has had nothing but good experiences.

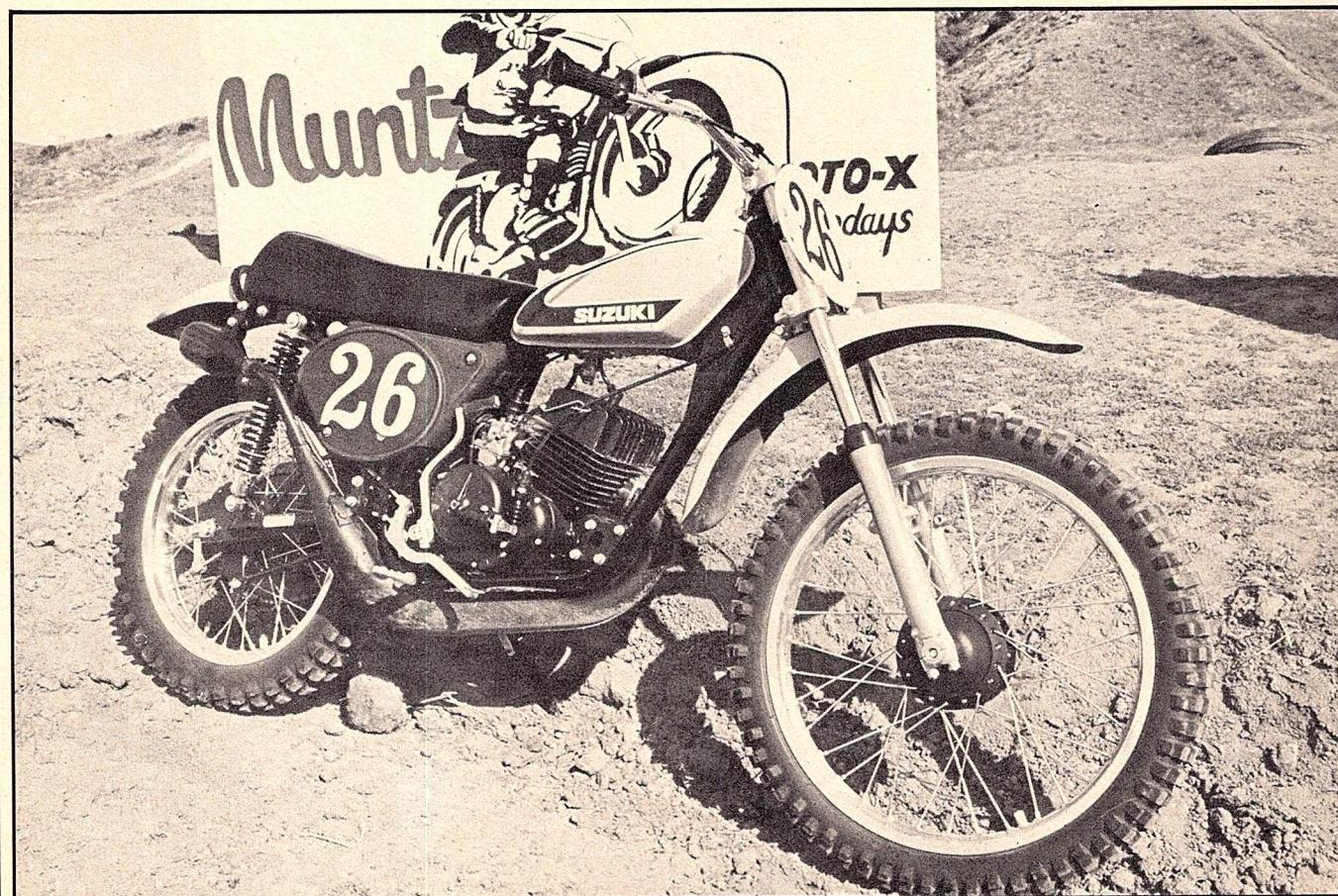
There are a number of reasons why the oil injection should be removed. It not only saves some weight, it prevents you from running out of oil or problems if you have oil pump trouble. It also makes it easier to take plug readings. The procedure we will describe also applies to the 250 model. On the 400, just plug the

oil lines and start using pre-mix.

Back to the 125. We are not going to go through how to remove the engine from the frame and all that. If you can't handle that on your own, you can't handle the rest either.

Make sure your scoot is really clean before you start taking anything apart. The job you are about to perform takes about one hour for an experienced Suzie wrench. Count on at least four times as much for you.

HOW TO CONVERTING THE SUZUKI TM125 FROM OIL INJECTION TO PRE-MIX



Before you start wrenching, check that you have all parts and tools needed for the job. See the checklist. The only expensive part that you don't really want to buy is the rotor puller. Try to borrow one from a friend, or get together and buy one and start a puller pool.

The little plate for the oil pump hole can be easily made from a piece of flat aluminum — like the one Rocky made in our picture — but if you don't feel like it, or whatever, it can also be bought from the dealer

for \$1.76.

If there is anything wrong with your engine, such as poor shifting, a broken kickstarter or whatever, it has to be fixed separately. We'll only tell you how to remove the oil injection. It might be a good idea to wait with the oil injection till the engine needs to come apart and have all the work done at the same time. That's when you might need the shop manual that we listed in the parts column. You will also need a workbench or a table to work on and

some shop towels or rags. You are getting into the heart of the engine, like a surgeon; cleanliness is a must.

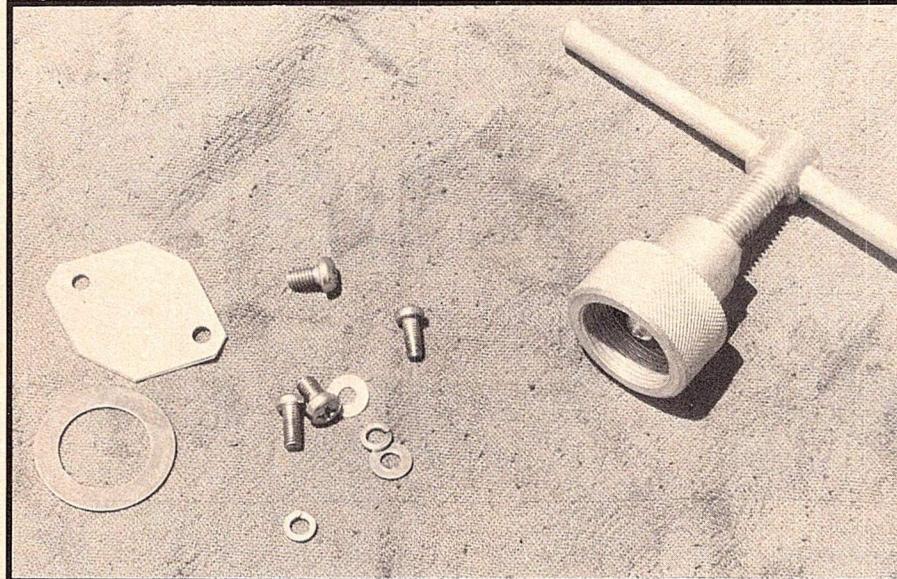
OK; here we go: After the engine is removed from the frame and the oil is drained, once again make sure that it is clean and that nothing can fall into it while you are working on it.

Remove the cylinder and head. Let the piston remain on the rod and wrap it in a small rag to protect it from dirt and scratches.

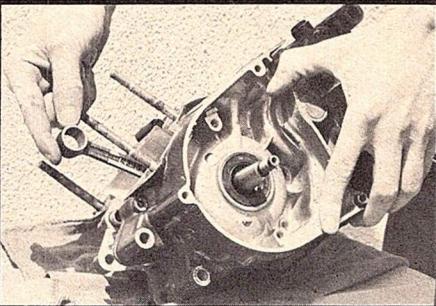
Remove the left side cover and the

If it's good enough for the new RM Suzukis it's good enough for your TM

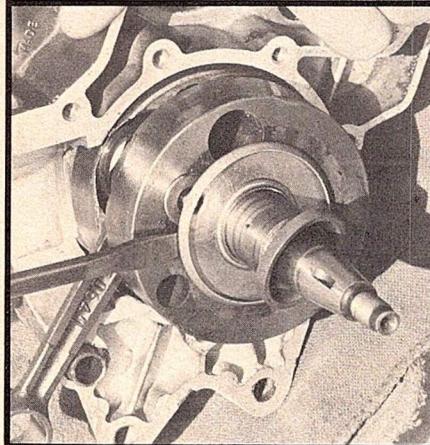
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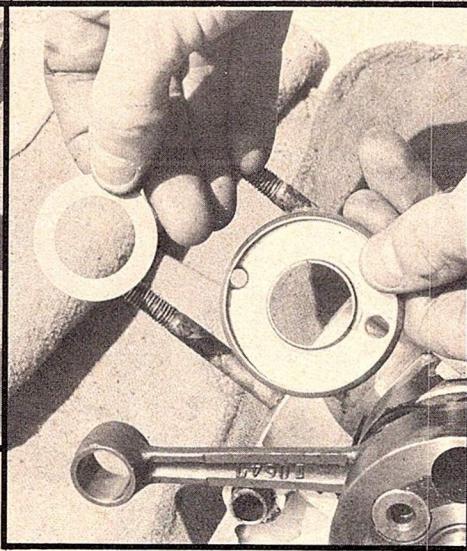
2



1. This is the hardware you need. Since you know what gaskets and seals look like, we didn't include them in the photo.



2. The left side case comes off easily; no hammers or bars are necessary, and everything stays in the right-hand case.



3. Remove the spacer with your fingers and pry off the slinger with a screwdriver.

4. Exchange the slinger for the Sachs washer.

3

4

drive sprocket. Loosen up the nut for the rotor, take it off and pull the rotor off with the puller.

Remove the screws that hold the crankcase together. With the engine lying on its right-hand side, tap very lightly with a plastic hammer or a screwdriver handle on the left side case while you are lifting it off with your other hand. The engine comes apart very easily and no violence or other tools are necessary. All engine parts will now stay in the right-hand side case and nothing will fall out, or

come apart, which will make it easier to reassemble. It's really easy and simple.

Remove the spacer on the crankshaft and pry off the slinger with a screwdriver. Install the Sachs 0.5mm washer in its place and reinstall the spacer again so that when you are done it will look like picture #5. Remove the little white plastic drive piece from the oil pump drive shaft. Now we are done with the right-hand side of the engine.

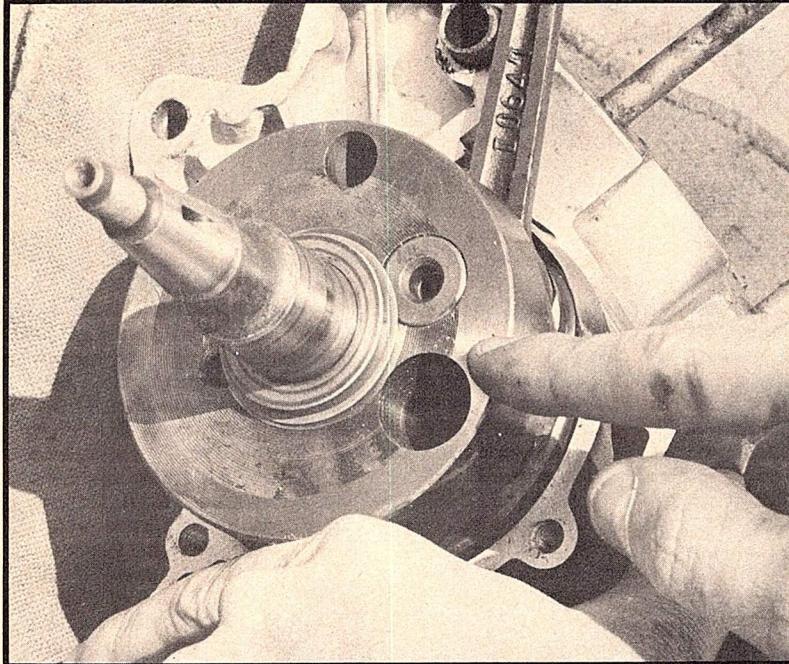
Look inside the left side case. On

top of the main bearing is a washer with a sharp edge pointing towards you. Grab the edge with a pair of flat-nose pliers and twist in two places 180 degrees apart, and the washer will come right out.

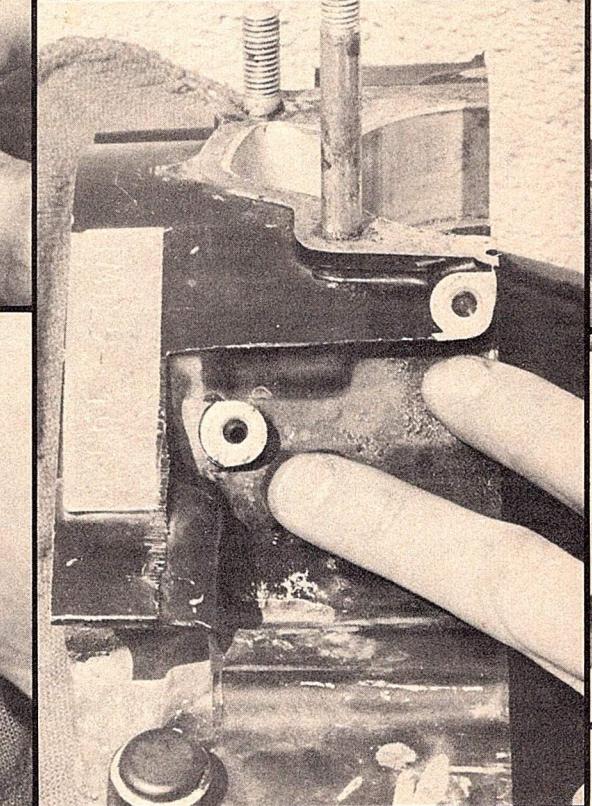
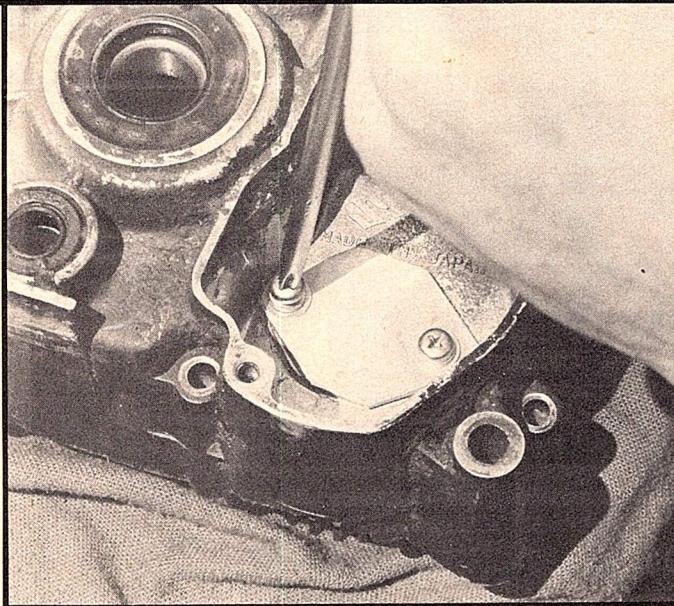
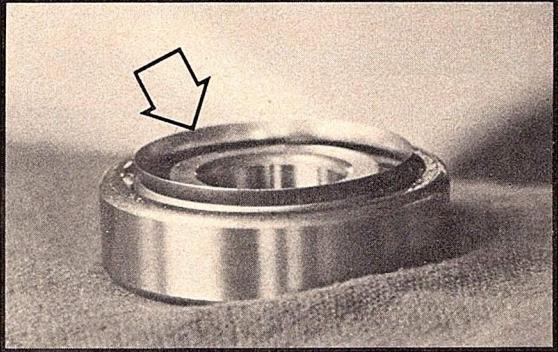
Turn the case over and remove the oil pump and its lines. Install the plate with its gasket and tighten up the two screws. Plug the two holes where the oil lines went into the engine with the two screws you bought, using the two washers that were used there previously. Pry out

SUZUKI TM125

5



6



8

7

the three seals with a screwdriver and install the new ones with the plastic hammer.

That's all there is to it. We are now ready to start reassembly. Remove and clean up after the old center gasket. Apply grease or oil to the gasket surface and put the new gasket in place. Take a last look before you put the case back on to be sure that everything is clean and you have not dropped anything in the engine. With the gasket in place, put the case back on and tap it lightly

with the plastic hammer so it goes together. Again it goes together easily and absolutely no violence need be used. Just before the two cases make contact, take a look to check the gasket. Put the screws in and tighten them. Check that the crank and gears turn easily.

Install the ignition according to the photo. Keep the two marks right across the middle of the top screw hole. Install the rotor and the countershaft sprocket. Remember to install the O-ring behind the

countershaft sprocket. Install the new base gasket, the cylinder and head with the new cylinder head gasket, and bolt the engine into the frame. No rejetting is necessary. Don't forget to remove the oil tank and to use pre-mix in the gas tank. Rocky recommends a bean oil mixed 32 to one, if all-out racing is your thing; otherwise use a good synthetic oil, also 32 to one. Mineral two-stroke oils should be mixed 20 to one.

Well, that's it. How long did it take you? Have fun. W

5. Install the washer and the spacer and you are done with the crank.

9

6. We took the main bearing out of the left case to get a good photo of it. Pull the washer with the sharp edge out with flat-nose pliers, just by grabbing it at the indicated arrows and twisting. In photo #11 you can see what it looked like after we pulled it out. It is not necessary for you to remove the bearing, let it stay in the case.

7. Remove the oil pump and its lines and cover up the hole with the plate.

8. Plug the holes with the screws you bought.

9. These three seals should be exchanged.

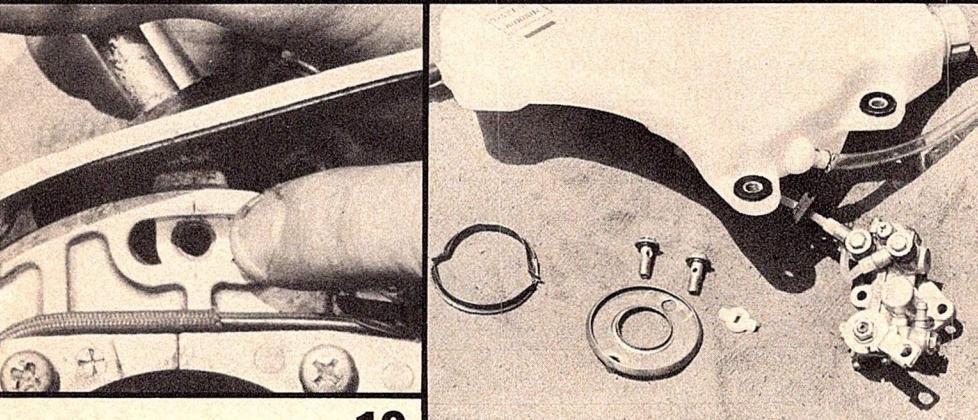
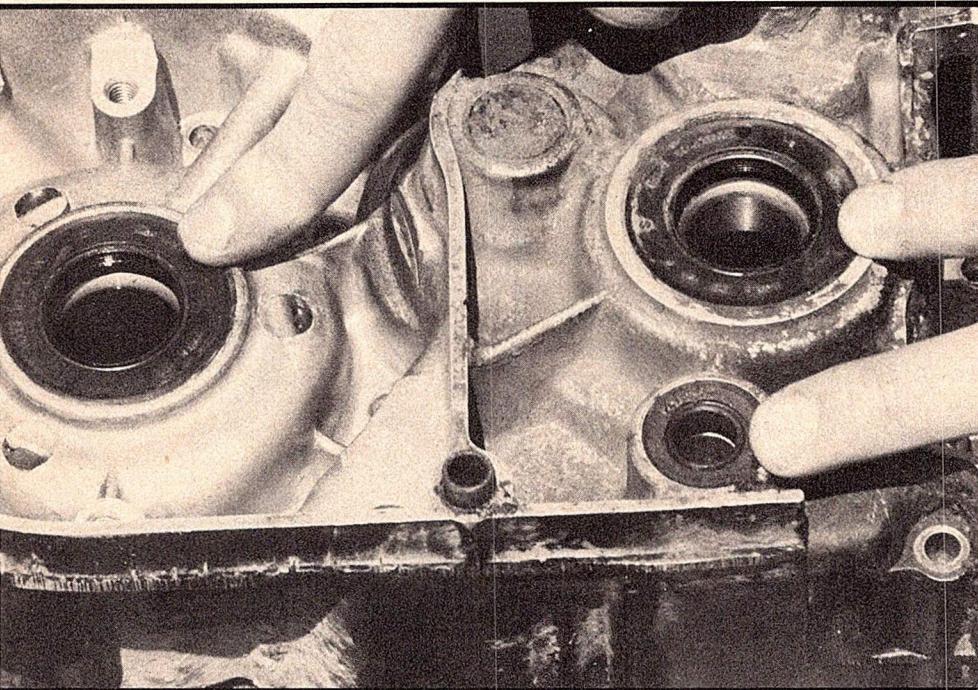
10. This is how to set the timing: Line up the two marks over the middle of the screw hole.

11. Stick these leftovers in a box for when you want to sell the bike.

PARTS TO GET

Rotor puller (09930-31610)	.....	\$8.85
TM125 shop manual (99301-28300)	.....	\$5.95
Oil pump cover plate (16745-16700)	.....	\$1.76
Two 5x12 screws with washers	.....	\$.40
Two 6x12 screws	.....	\$.20
Sachs 0.5mm shim (0644105002)	.....	\$.40
Seal for crankshaft (09283-25037)	.....	\$1.77
Seal for drive shaft (09283-25009)	.....	\$1.18
Seal for shift shaft (09285-12002)	.....	\$.89
Magneto case gasket (11483-28000)	.....	\$.89
Center gasket (11481-28000)	.....	\$1.77
Oil pump gasket (16731-03100)	.....	\$.11
Cylinder head gasket (11141-28700)	.....	\$1.16
Base gasket (11241-28000)	.....	\$.30
550cc transmission oil	.....	\$.95
Two-stroke oil for pre-mix	.....

All this is Suzuki stuff except the Sachs washer — which you have to get from your friendly Sachs-Penton-Hercules-Monark dealer.



10

11

By David Maltais

The start of the 500cc rounds of the World Championship at Payerne, Switzerland, was reminiscent of the Torsten Hallman-Joel Robert dogfights of the '60s. In this case it was the renewal of the Heikki Mikkola-Roger DeCoster battle from the '74 GP season. These two went at it — neck and neck — for the full 90 minutes in each moto, with the end result a win and a second for each. This gave each rider a 27-point total and a tie for the number one position in the series opener. DeCoster got the nod for the overall on a better elapsed time — 33½ seconds — but it's only a moral victory, as the points are what will tell the story at the end of the year.

There was no doubt in anyone's mind about who the two contenders are for this year's title. Mikkola and DeCoster are head and shoulders above the rest of the GP crowd. Each has the speed, smoothness and determination, and it will more than likely be a battle of survival of their machines.

Roger DeCoster, Belgium's three-time World Champion, lost out to Mikkola last year by only nine points (174-165). For Roger it was a great disappointment. He felt he had it all together but his Suzuki kept breaking underneath him, usually while he was in the lead and most of the time when he was ahead of Mikkola. He was looking at an unprecedented fourth consecutive World Championship in the 500cc class, and to come so close and not get it, really burnt.

After the GP season DeCoster and most of the other top European GP riders contested the Trans-AMA series, with Roger racking up enough wins and points to outdistance the second-place man — teammate Gerrit Wolsink — by 370 points. Winning the Trans-AMA gave DeCoster a psychological edge for the start of this year's series in Europe for the World Championship.

Heikki Mikkola, the quiet Husqvarna rider from Finland, contested the series in the States also. He was fresh from winning his first World Championship and everyone thought that the struggle between these two champions would continue anew in the Trans-AMA. An ankle injury from the Czech GP started to bother Mikkola right from the start, so he packed it in and flew back to

Finland for some serious healing and a well-earned rest.

During the winter his wife, Kaija, gave birth to a boy, their second child. What with the new baby, training and the testing of new race equipment, Heikki didn't have much time to kick back before the start of the international races in early March. He was injured in one of these races and was rumored to have broken his back. After a short recuperation period — a few weeks — he was as good as new. So much for rumors about the seriousness of his injury!

The twisty, bumpy circuit of the Swiss GP lies near Lac Chatel between Bern and Lausanne, and is one of the finest tracks in the world. It had snowed three days before the event and practice found the loamy soil heavy and slow. But when the wind picked up a little and the sun came out the morning of the race, as Lackey prayed it would, the course became a hell of a lot quicker.

The drop of the starting gate for the first moto of the 500cc GP season found two Suzukis jumping the field — Wolsink and DeCoster. Mikkola was a distant tenth, and Lackey a few bikes later. As the first riders approached the bridge undercrossing and the S-turn to complete the first lap, it was still Wolsink and DeCoster leading Bengt Aberg and his nearly stock 352cc Bultaco and Frans Sigmans on the Maico.

It took a few more laps before the field started to settle into some firm positions and DeCoster took the lead from Wolsink. The most noticeable rider moving through the pack was Mikkola, and he was burning up the course. By the eighth lap Mikkola had no one else to pass, and he had just devastated Lackey, Aberg, Ake Jonsson and a still surprisingly swift John Banks on a CCM four-stroke. DeCoster was stretching his lead on every lap, and as he started lapping the slower riders his speed became more visible. Next to his pace a guy riding a rocket looked slow.

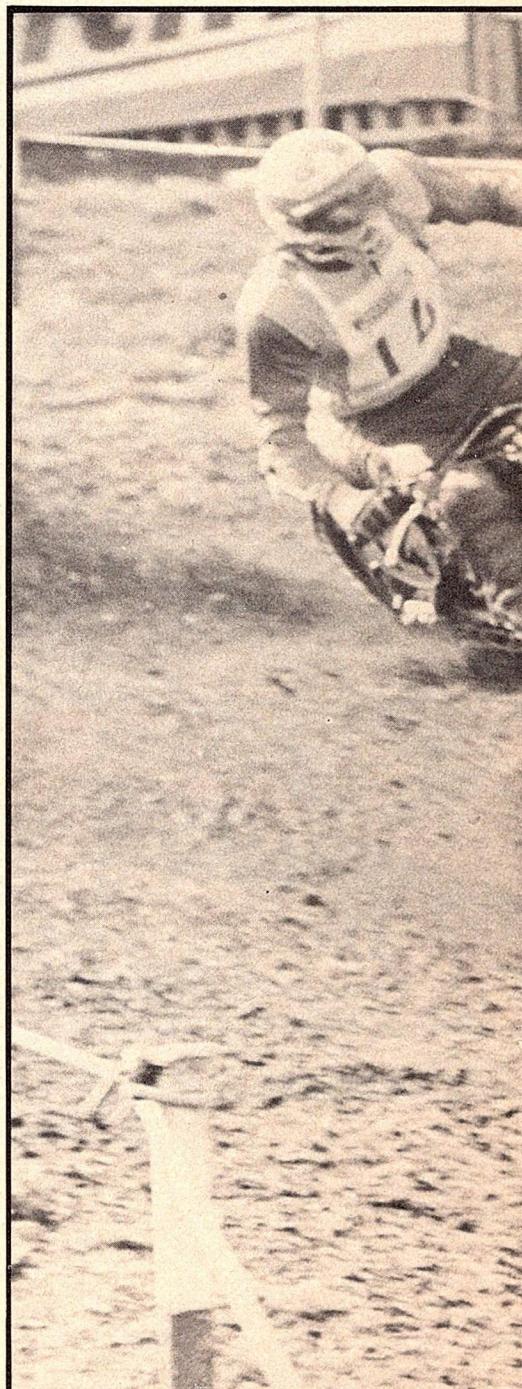
Mikkola couldn't make up any ground on DeCoster, and to add to his situation, he started to lose his rhythm at about the halfway point. It seemed he was out of control as he

Arne Kring and Brad Lackey are strong support for the Husky team, and together with Mikkola give the brand top overall placings of any manufacturer in the 500 class.

came through the rough sections, and he later complained of a problem in one of his gas Girlings plus an excess of sweat running into his eyes caused by an inadequate headband in his new Nava helmet.

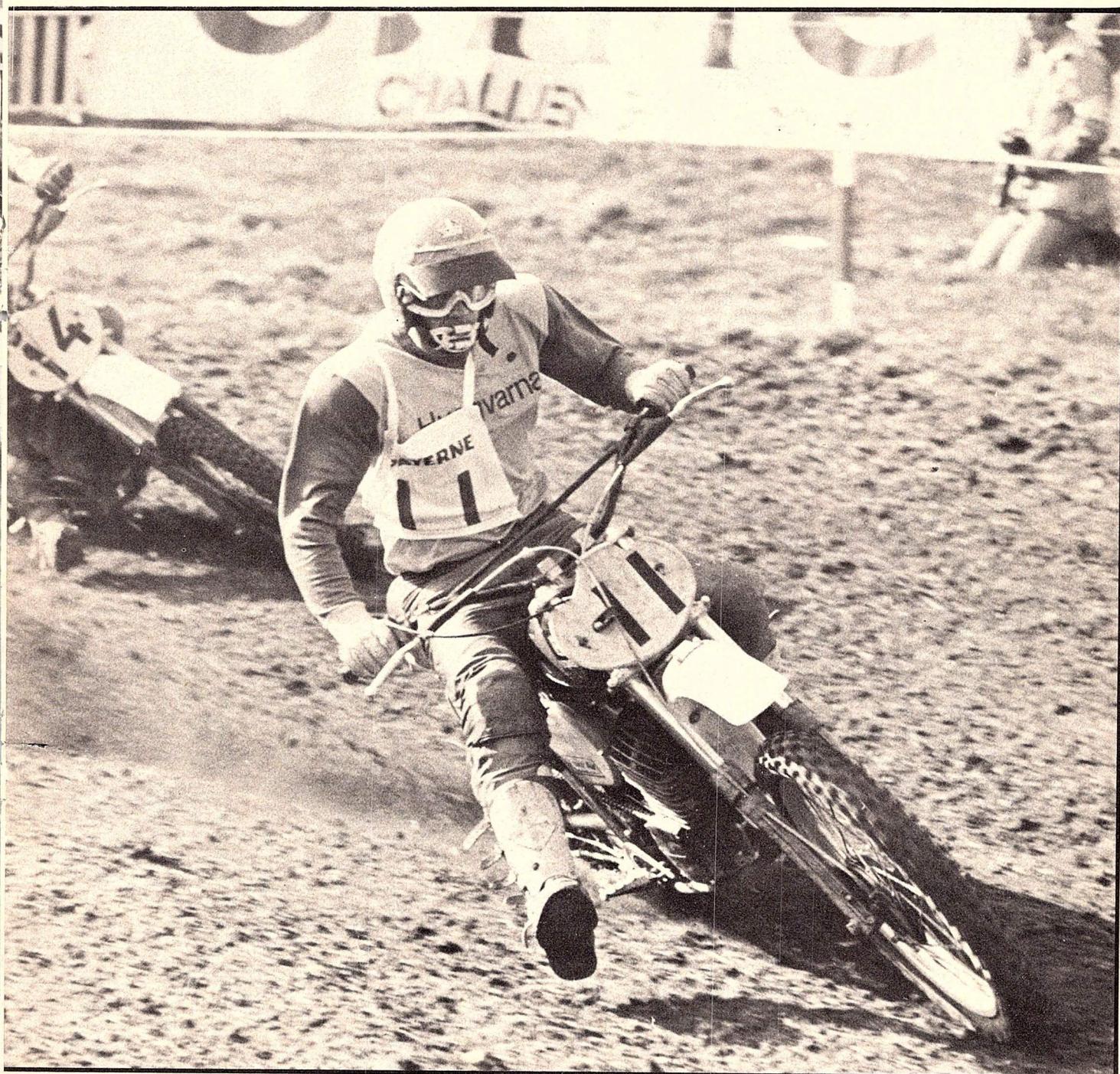
Mikkola was able to hold on to second with Wolsink and Aberg taking the third and fourth spots as the 40-minute plus two laps moto ended. Lackey ran a strong fifth and had to hold off a very hard charging Ake Jonsson at the finish. Arne Kring finishing seventh placed all three factory Husky riders in the top ten.

Starting positions for the second moto are determined by the first moto finish, and DeCoster was the



***DeCoster and Mikkola,
Suzuki and Husqvarna; it's
1974 all over again.
Who will break?***

**500 GRAND PRIX PAYERNE,
SWITZERLAND**







PAYERNE, SWITZERLAND

World Champion Heikki Mikkola puts the move on Mirek Kubicek.

Color by David Maltais

PAYERNE, SWITZERLAND

DeCoster won the overall because of his 35-second lead over Mikkola in the first moto.

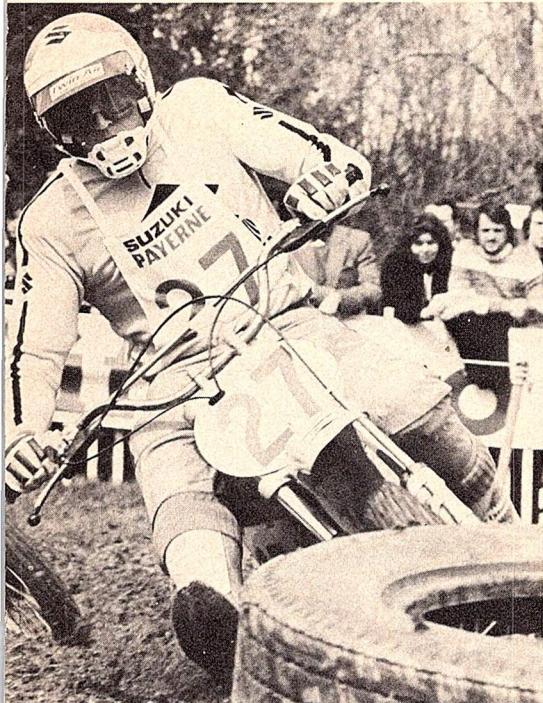


DeCoster and Kiyo and Pelle and Mikkola. 1975 looks like it's going to be a helluva battle, again!

RESULTS SWISS 500cc Payerne, Switzerland

1. Roger DeCoster, Belgium (1/2) Suzuki
2. Heikki Mikkola, Finland (2/1) Husky
3. Gerrit Wolsink, Holland (3/3) Suzuki
4. Brad Lackey, U.S.A. (5/4) Husky
5. Arne Kring, Sweden (7/5) Husky
6. Ake Jonsson, Sweden (6/6) Yamaha
7. Frans Sigmans, Holland (8/7) Maico
8. Arne Lodal, Denmark (13/11) Bultaco
9. Vladimir Khovdiakov, U.S.S.R. (12/13) CZ
10. Jaak Van Velthoven, Belgium (16/10) Yamaha
11. Ludwig Reinbold, West Germany (17/12) Kr-Maico
12. Gote Liljegren, Finland (18/15) Husky
13. Josef Loetscher, Switzerland (14/20) Kr-Maico
14. Daniel Terroitin, France (21/14) Maico
15. Rob Hooper, Great Britain (20/17) Husky

Gerrit Wolsink took third in each moto and is right there waiting for a slight mistake by either of the top two. He's riding extremely fast and consistent.



first bike to the line going into the second go-round with a 35-second cushion on Mikkola for the overall. As Mikkola lined up his Husky it was evident that he had switched back to his Bell RT helmet. The Italian lire involved in the Nava contract apparently wasn't as important to him as winning the next moto and points for the World Championship title.

If the second moto dice between DeCoster and Mikkola is any indication of how heavy the racing is going to get this season, then it's going to be an unbelievable duel. At the drop of the gate DeCoster got the holeshot with Mikkola and Wolsink right behind. Sigmans, Aberg and Lackey were close with Lackey closing the door on Aberg to take over fifth by the third lap.

Out in front of the pack the DeCoster/Mikkola duo was like a train as they passed and lapped the slower riders. It was a fantastic display of speed and ability. They had lapped all but six riders by the end of the moto. DeCoster, making one of his infrequent mistakes, lost the lead to Mikkola as he slid out on a downhill off-camber turn early in the moto. Wolsink got by him but was repassed after two laps. From then to the finish DeCoster played

Bengt Aberg's luck is still holding (bad), with a good fourth place finish in the first moto and a DNF in the second.



catch-up. On the last lap he stuffed a wheel under Mikkola but was unable to get by on the tight line heading for the finish. A split second separated the two at the flag. Wolsink followed his Suzuki teammate to the checkered for third and Lackey pulled in with a fantastic fourth. Aberg had retired earlier with a bruised hand after hitting a course marker. Lackey's finish — fourth overall — was the best ever for an American in a 500cc GP event. Arne Kring pulled in for a fifth, leading Jonsson, who was the last of the super-fast guys at sixth. An unbelievable race!

DeCoster and Mikkola tied for the day in the World Championship standings with 27 points, but Roger was the overall winner of the race by only 33.9 seconds. This is important for Roger as the psychological advantage will be a heavy factor this year, since the two riders are so evenly matched.

The frame in Roger's bike had cracked near the motor mounts during practice and, as the factory mechanics welded it back together, I asked Gerrit if he had had the same problem. He said, "No, but Roger is harder on his bike than I am." Roger says the metal is too strong and the tubing for the frame doesn't have

enough flex. The Huskys are dependable and strong and whoever wins this year will have to have everything going for him 100-percent — machine strength and rider condition and desire. I'm sure Roger still has nightmares about last year's mechanical disasters that stopped him in many of the motos.

In his third full year on the GP tour for the World Championship Brad has matured and gotten himself together more than anyone ever thought could be possible. After the Trans-AMA series last winter he had only a few weeks' rest before going to the Husqvarna International Training Camp in the northern part of Sweden to get ready for the '75 racing season. During that rest he spent a few days at the condominium of Don McGee of Scott Goggles, doing some skiing and just relaxing. Being away from motocross completely and trying something boss and different probably helped Brad's head a lot. In Switzerland he was really excited about the skiing, and was also feeling great because he believed that he was in the best shape that he has ever been in. Lori agrees also, and who else would know better than the one who is with him constantly? They've even decided that they're so good for each other that after the U.S. GP in June they are going to become Mr. and Mrs. on the 24th of that month.

A definitely heavy day in Switzerland at this season's opener, with Roger and Heikki starting the year full-blast and holding back nothing, as each wants the 500 crown so bad. There will be a month's break until the next GP in Italy in the middle of May. Until then it will be Belgian Championship races for Roger, with motocross races in between in other countries nearby to keep him in shape. Roger likes to ride his bike or run a few kilometers every morning to keep in razor-sharp condition and to burn off some of the enormous energy that builds up with the pressure of racing. Heikki, who stays with his family in his trailer that he parks next to his manager's house in Belgium, likes to run because it feels good. His manager has even built a sauna for Heikki and his family in the garage so that Heikki can have what he needs to keep feeling good — and be ready for those many Sunday afternoons this year when he and Roger will battle it out for the Championship of the World.

PERSONALITY PETER STARR, FILMMAKER

By Dick Miller

Peter Starr is a filmmaker. He's also a motorcyclist. He has several new films about motorcycles — of which two involve motocross — that will be on syndicated TV in the near future. If his name is familiar it might be that you saw one of his first offerings called "Bad Rock," about the ISDT qualifier held in Oregon a couple of years ago.

Peter hails from Coventry, England, and is in his early 30s. Peter's wife, Pat, is American and they are newly married. His English background put him in direct contact with motorcycles and at the age of 18 he worked for Triumph in their export office. That same year he owned his first motorcycle, and it's been love ever since. Looking through his scrapbook reveals many newspaper accounts of his prowess on a road racer, and although he is, or was, no world champion, his racing record gives him an expertise and credibility that makes you listen to his views.

Motorcycles have been the source of excitement in many offerings from our "Hollywood-type" cheap thrill producers. They don't give a damn about the sport and create great problems with our image. The Peter Starrs and Bruce Browns are few and far between. They are motorcycle people who chose to make their living producing films about motorcycles. Besides hoping to make a profit for their efforts, they hope to enlighten people on our sport. We should give them our support. "To Be A Motocross Champion" and "Portrait Of A Champion" are half-hour documentaries on Marty Smith and Roger DeCoster. They are set up for nationwide distribution on TV. I've seen both and they are excellent. They'll be available by the time you read this and you can start bugging your local stations for them.

DICK: Are you a good bike rider?

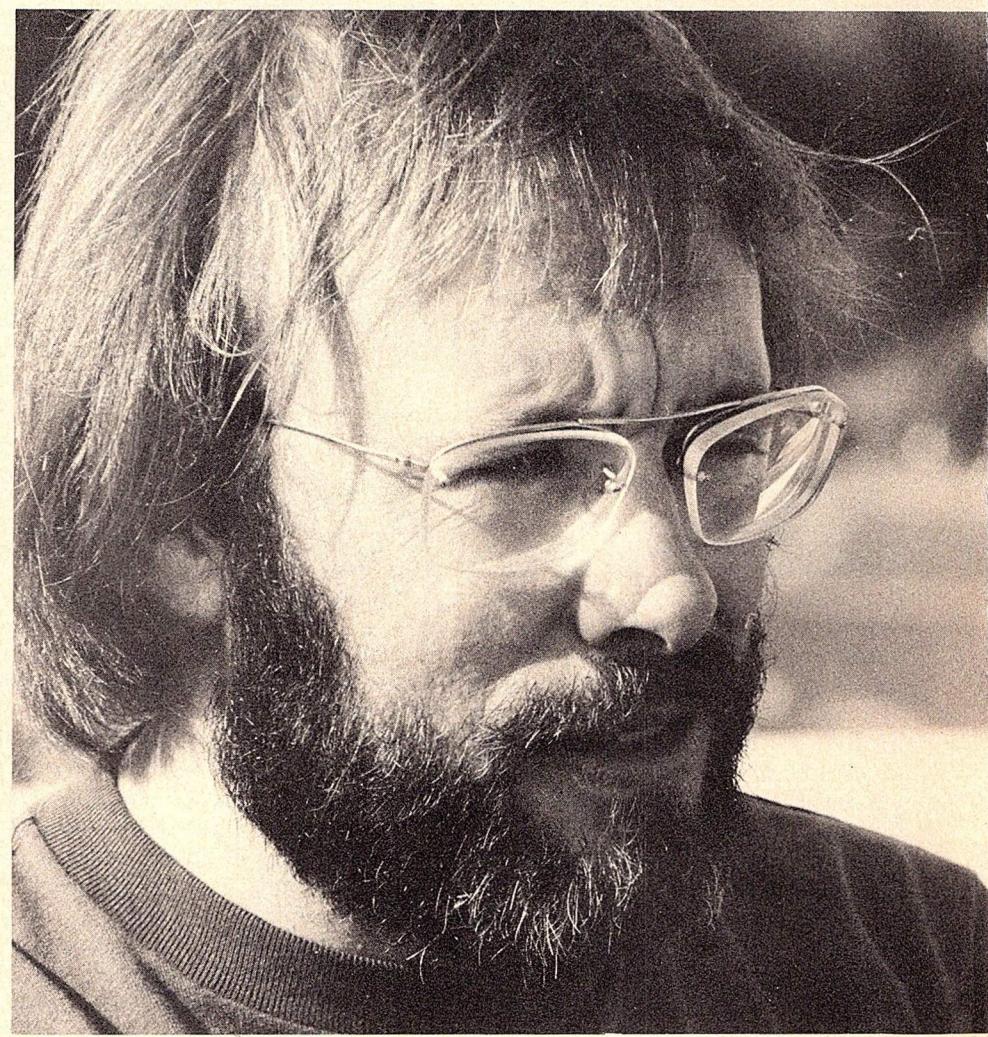
PETER: Rolf Tibblin says, all you gotta do is turn it on — it'll straighten itself out. Sure, I'll try it (chuckles). Easy to do in theory. And, of course, the best riders do it. But . . . I don't think I was really destined to be a racer. I would like to think so at one time, but, uh, it just wasn't . . .

DICK: But you've always liked motorcycles.

PETER: Oh yeah. Always. My art teacher when I was in high school used to race a 350 Gold Star in the Clubman races.

DICK: They're a neat bike.

PETER: Yeah. He had a beard and was



really a trip. Really together teacher — he didn't have a car. He rode everywhere on a 16-inch Norton with a chair (sidecar) on the side. He'd put his Gold Star on the chair, ride it to a race, race it, put it back on the chair and ride it home with him. I mean, talk about being a character, the guy was *really* a trip. And that's what turned me onto motorcycles.

DICK: Is Peter Starr your real name?

PETER: My real name is Graham Morris.

DICK: How did you come up with "Peter Starr?"

PETER: When I came to America, I became a disc jockey and they figured that Graham Morris wasn't a very good disc jockey name. So they christened me "Peter Starr." (Laughter.) And it's been

that way ever since. That was in San Antonio, Texas.

DICK: That figures (laughs). Do you miss racing?

PETER: Oh yeah. Road racing, I miss. Super.

DICK: How did you get involved with motocross?

PETER: Short circuits — you know, scratching grass, what happens when you take off and there ain't no road left (chuckles).

DICK: It's hard to get any exciting pictures in road racing, you know?

PETER: It was in those days. More so than today, because people just weren't into photography then. It was like, point the camera, click and that's it. Now I think you can get good pictures in road racing.

"Something that Tibblin said really impressed me; he said, 'Roger is the most perfect rider around today. His style is perfect — absolutely perfect'."



DICK: So you never really rode any dirt races at all?

PETER: Not at all — I'd never been on a dirt bike.

DICK: Didn't it interest you at all? I mean, did you go and see any of the motocrosses?

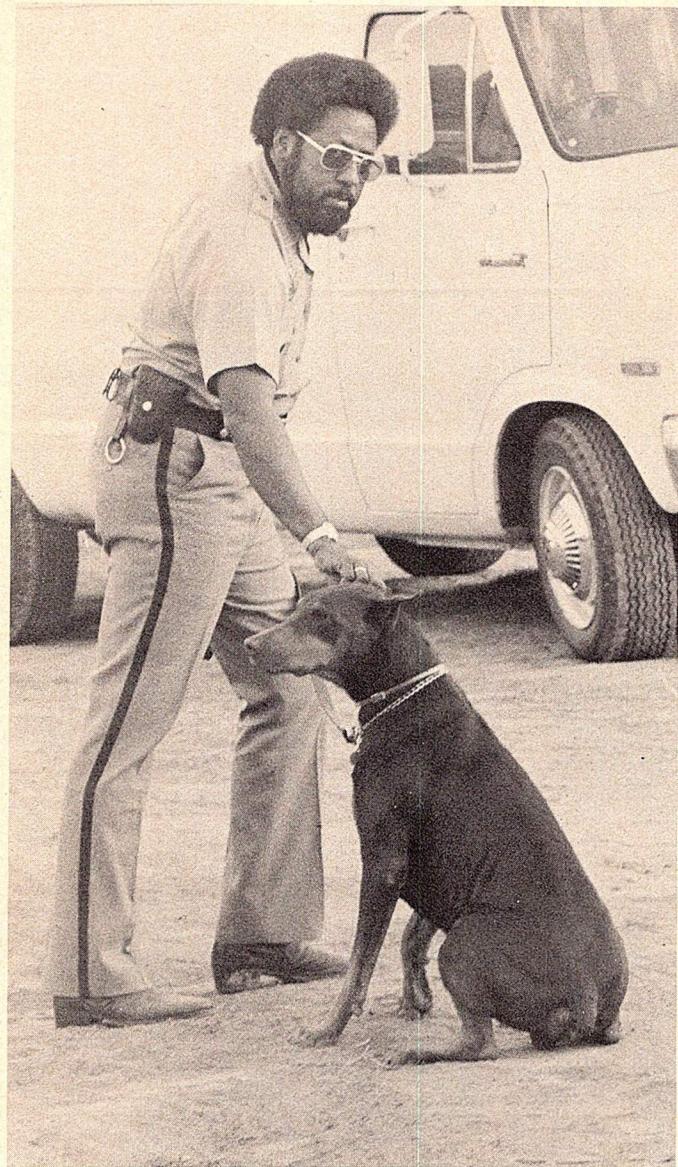
PETER: Yeah, once or twice. Anyway, the first time I rode a dirt bike — the Cowbell Enduro up in Washington. I rode that two years in a row. First year I didn't finish — I kept stickin' in the mudhole. I rode a Bultaco. The second year I rode a 185 Yamaha, twin-cylinder electric starter. The only difference between that and a standard street bike was that we put knobby tires on it. I was doing really well — was in the top ten. Until the last section, I lost the gear leever and somewhere out there there's

a three-mile first-gear mudhole. Somewhere in that three miles I lost the gear leever. I came out up to the trail again where you get some speed to change into second gear and there was no gear leever. I didn't have any visegrips or nothing, so I finished the next ten miles in first gear. Finished 18th overall. There were about 90 starters. I really enjoyed it.

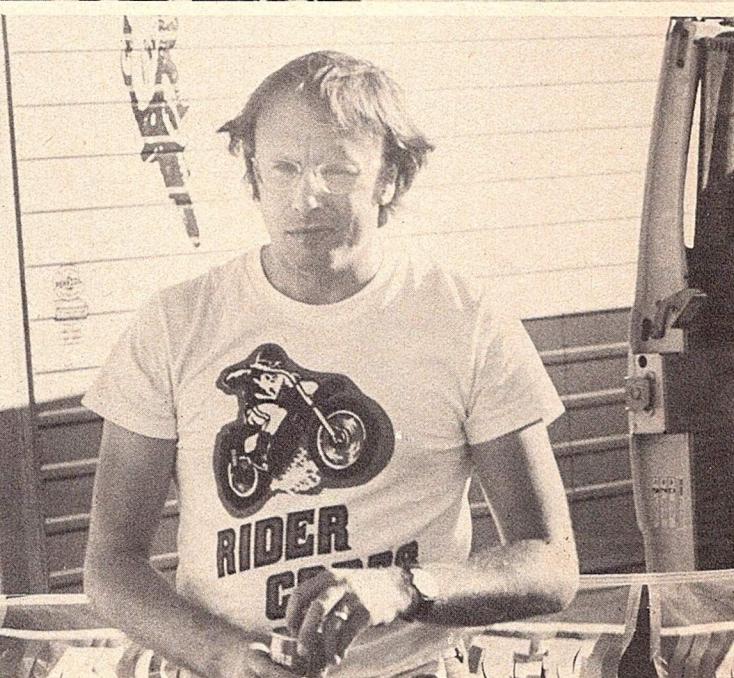
I didn't ride again; I was popping around the world trying to make a career for myself, out of motorcycling. I wasn't into films — well, I made a film, made three films in '67 and '68 which was sort of the birth of the film industry for me. Then I went back into radio — as a disc jockey. I got into record production. I produced several albums — couple of them sold quite well.

And then I started the Rider Card Company — do you remember those greeting cards? Motorcycle greeting cards — I had six designs, and four sizes of greeting cards with envelopes. Blew some up to poster size. Another financial disaster. But doing that got me introduced to Marvin Foster at Hodaka. He said, gee, it'd be nice to make a film at Bad Rock. So, I said, yeah, sure would. I didn't even know what it was. I said, sure it would — who's gonna pay? (Chuckle.) He got Pabatco to put up \$6000 on it. I told him we could do it for twelve grand. You could have done it in '67, but you couldn't in '73 — there's no way. So, he got six out of Pabatco, I got seven out of Pennzoil, another grand out of Pabatco — \$14,000. And I ended up putting \$4000 in it myself. I told Pennzoil

PETER STARR



"... and he, they, would help us set up our cameras and this bloody goon comes over with this Doberman pinscher, right?"



I could get them all kinds of TV exposure with it; but I didn't know how in the hell I was going to do it. All I was concerned with then was actually making the damn thing. Well, I came back to L.A. and made prints of it and shipped it out and it's been on 72 stations today. It's been on eight of the top ten markets, 20 of the top 30. Prime time in four of the top markets in the country.

DICK: Since you did it for Pennzoil and Pabatco, do you still have the rights to the film?

PETER: Yes. I own the film. They basically buy it, their rights to the film . . .

DICK: Bruce sold his rights to Yamaha.

PETER: Well, that's OK. I'm sure he was well compensated. I would do the same in his position probably. I own it

mainly because it still owes me money. Pennzoil and Hodaka — when it shows on TV, they get a one-minute spot. Then I had sold a bit off to Datsun to raise some more money to pay for the distribution. The fact that it got so much television exposure is what prompted these other people to say, OK, we'll finance films. That started the Ontario film, and the DeCoster film . . .

DICK: What's the Ontario film?

PETER: The Champion Spark Plug Classic. I just decided that it was time I made another movie — nobody contracted me to do it. I just wanted to do it, and that seemed like a good place for me to start, and Suzuki bought it. Champion first agreed to buy a part, then Suzuki bought a part and Datsun bought a part of it. Still got some to sell.

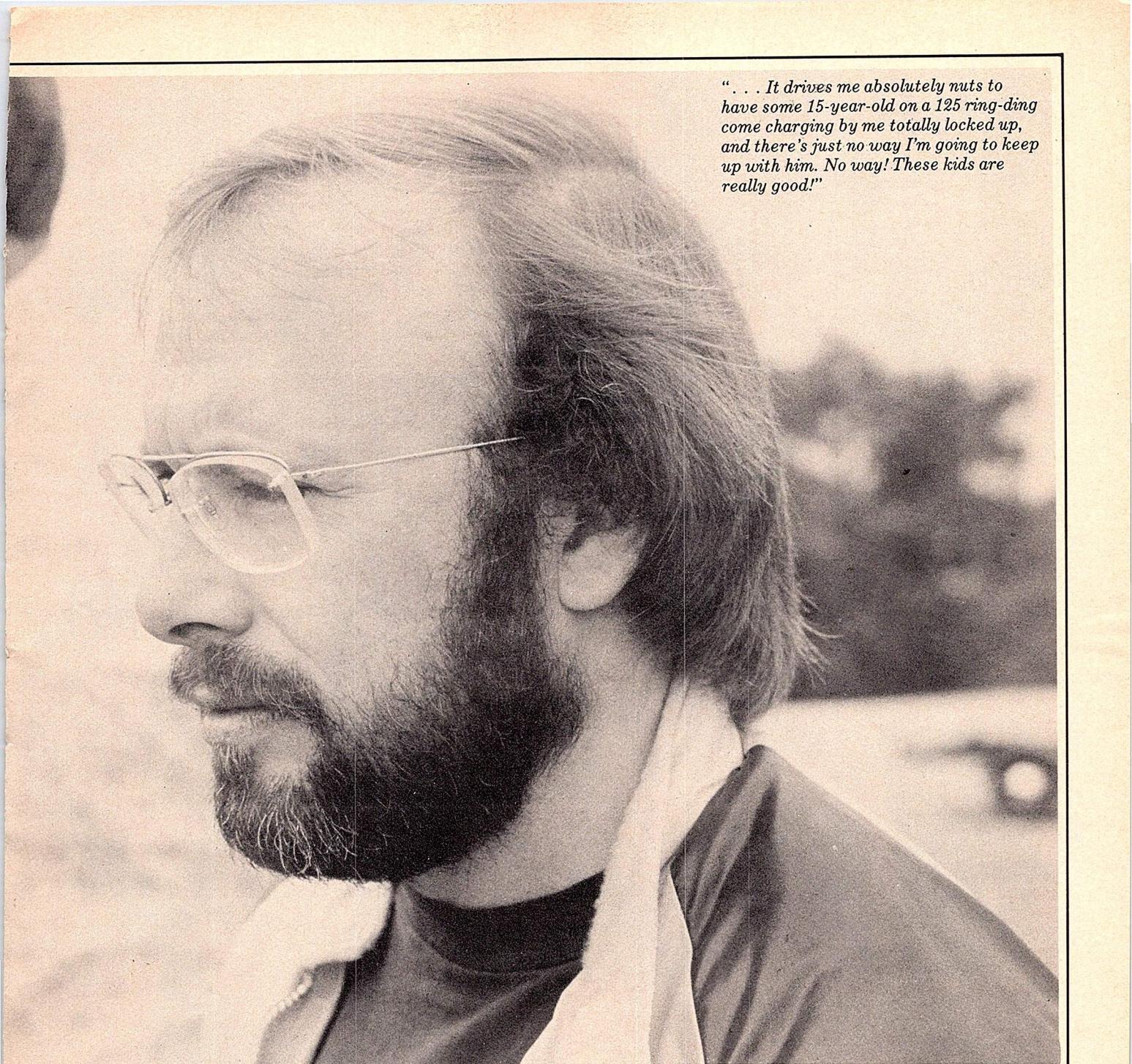
It hasn't been released yet — it's finished in terms of editing and work on sound effects.

DICK: How can you do that? You're shooting basically three films at the same time. Isn't that difficult?

PETER: Not really. Because . . . I'm directing them and shooting them, and producing them and writing them. I'm not editing them, which is the one thing I don't think I could do three times.

DICK: You did the Bad Rock thing which is being released now. And you're doing Ontario now, you've got the Roger DeCoster film and the Marty Smith film. So the last two are motocross.

PETER: Right, but they're very different. The DeCoster film is about Roger on two levels: as a person, you know, like a human being, an individual



"... It drives me absolutely nuts to have some 15-year-old on a 125 ring-ding come charging by me totally locked up, and there's just no way I'm going to keep up with him. No way! These kids are really good!"

guy. And as a World Champion Motocross Racer. The whole thing starts out at Puyallup, and then from Puyallup we get into his personal life in Belgium. Then we get back to America where we introduce his wife. Photography in it is beautiful. Absolutely first-class photography. I didn't shoot it — I directed it, but I didn't shoot it.

DICK: Do you always use the same photographers?

PETER: No. I'm getting it to where, like now, I know which photographer to hire for whatever sequence is to be shot. It takes time and *knowing* these people to choose them for the best thing. I'm getting to the point now where I know which cameraman is good for what kind of work, because they *are* different.

DICK: Are the cameramen that you

work with now, are they involved with motorcycles at all?

PETER: Most of the guys that I've hired have shot for "ABC Wide World of Sports." Three of them shot a lot of Bruce Brown footage, so they're not really strangers to bikes. They all worked for me on the DeCoster film at various times. We shot the stuff with Laurie and Roger out at Malibu — just really beautiful. I'm really happy with it. And then I get into the Livermore race. And then we end up at Saddleback. And the reason I'm doing all this is because, first of all, I *want* to do it; secondly, everybody sat back to see what the hell Bad Rock was gonna do before they do anything else —

DICK: Did you shoot that sequence when Roger was at Ontario on that road

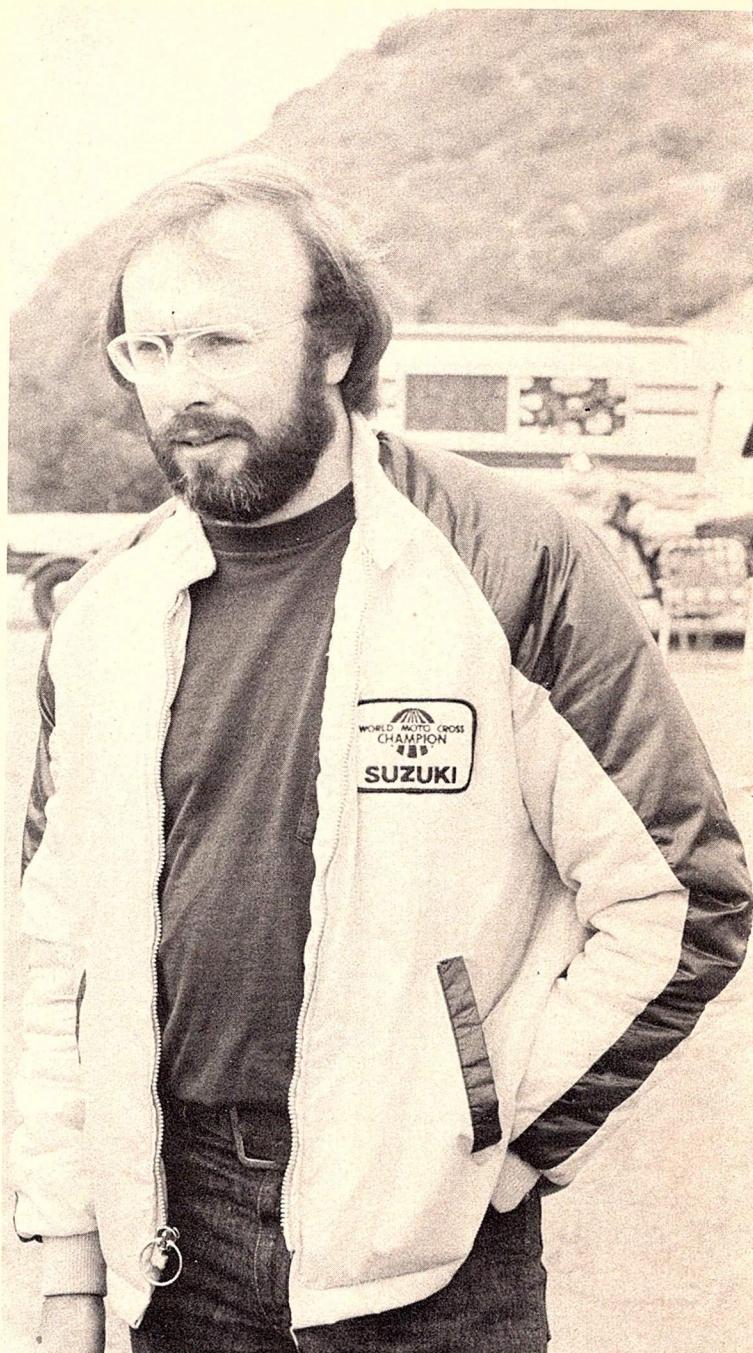
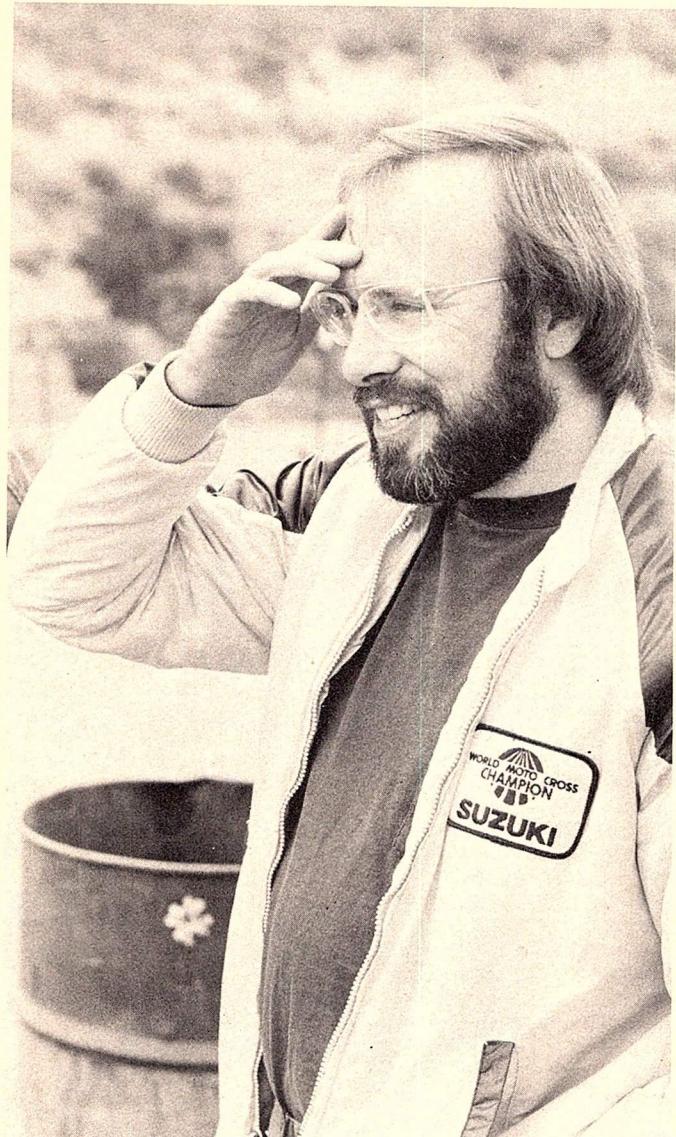
race bike?

PETER: Not personally, but we shot it. From a helicopter and from the ground as well. His first time ever on a road racer, and he lapped in two minutes, ten seconds — which was faster than 80 percent of the riders during practice. Or, shall we say, as fast or faster than 80 percent of the riders. And he was wearing Paul Smart's leathers, Barry Sheen's helmet and his own motocross boots. Pretty incredible.

DICK: I heard that they blocked the track to get him off. They didn't want him to . . .

PETER: Yeah. Barry Sheen was saying, get him in, I'll lose my job! (chuckles). Cause he was going well. He'd only been out there 20 minutes and he was lapping in two; ten — I mean, he was nowhere

PETER STARR



"I became a disc jockey and they figured that Graham Morris wasn't a very good disc jockey name. So they christened me Peter Starr."

near as fast as Barry, but on the other hand, I doubt if Barry could go that fast on a motocross bike the first time around, you know.

DICK: What did Roger say about it?

PETER: He liked it. His comment was that it's much more difficult than people imagine.

Gene Romero said something in the film — I think I'll use it — he said, racing at 180 mph is like driving down the freeway at 90 and suddenly turning into your driveway (chuckles). It makes you think!

DICK: Is that how you met Roger?

PETER: Right. He was out there with Bud Ekins visiting Barry Sheen. Well, I'd never met DeCoster before that day. I knew Joel Robert . . . we filmed him out there and Bud introduced me to him.

It was after that that the conversation turned to making a film about Roger. And, based on what we said, I was supposed to go to see him the next week. I filmed the last three Trans-AMAs and all the other stuff in between — really beautiful. And at the same time that I was doing that, I also got it from Pennzoil that they wanted a motocross film. I figured the best way they could go was with Marty Smith.

DICK: You came up with the idea of Marty Smith?

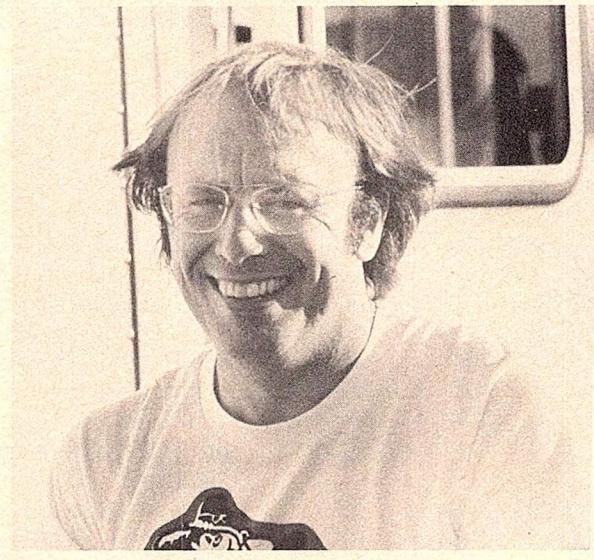
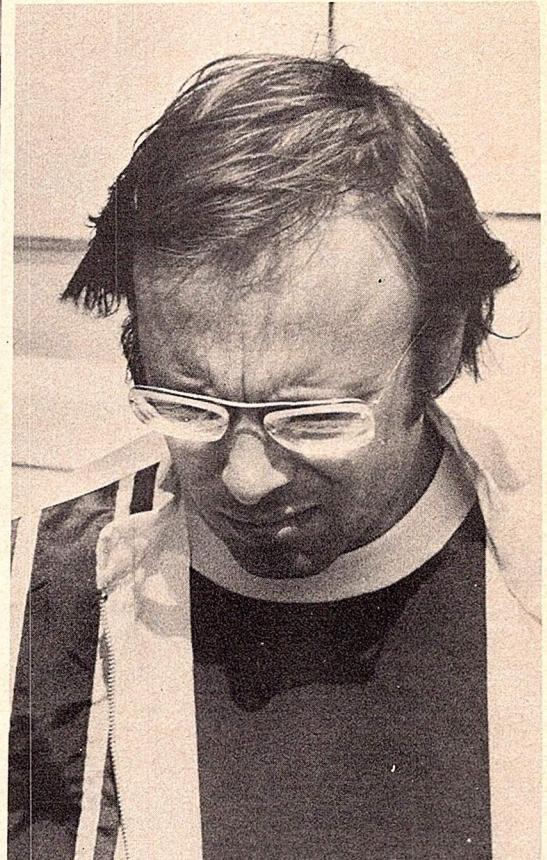
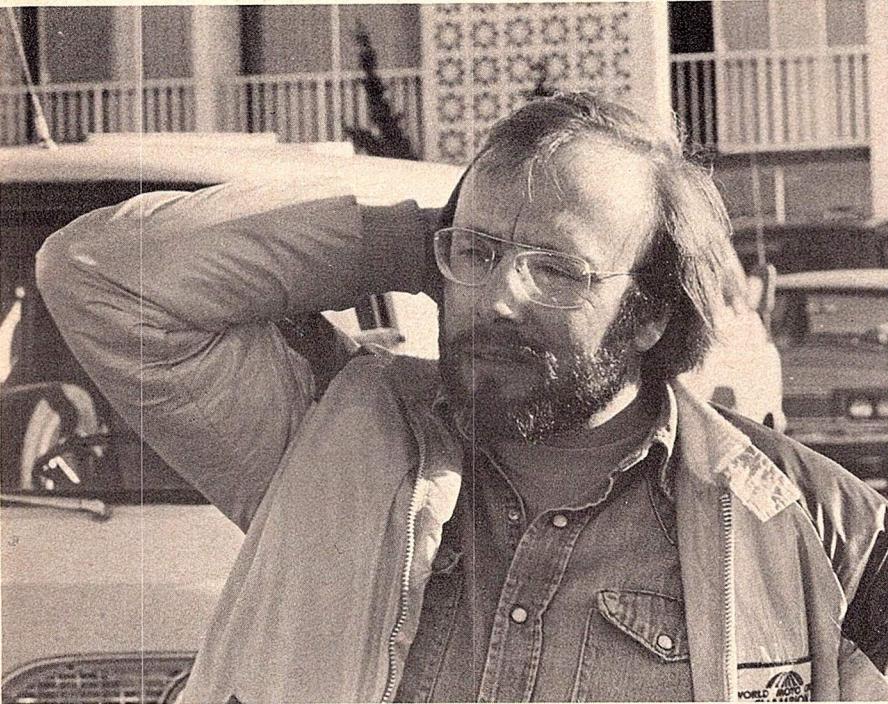
PETER: Yes.

DICK: What made you come up with that?

PETER: Well, I followed him through the newspapers. I'd never seen him ride — I've seen pictures of him — he's had eight years just to be Number One AMA

Champion. And I figured any kid who's 17 and can ride like that has got to have a future. Well, I'd never met him at that point. But then when we went up to Puyallup — this was before Pennzoil said OK — we filmed him at Puyallup and I watched him ride. That's when I first realized that, yeah, the kid really has got it. And I told Pennzoil that I filmed him at Puyallup and I said that this is the kid you've got to get. The reason that I made up my mind was, first of all, he was young. Secondly, he's a helluva rider. And he's got to be here another five years, so Pennzoil can get a long run out of the film. They wanted to bring in the Rolf Tibblin School — of course, they sponsor that. It's more or less an introduction to motocross, but featuring Marty Smith. We put him

"... Anything you wanna do that's good is gonna be difficult. If it's not a challenge it's not worth doing."



through the Tibblin School; we have him playing in the desert showing that it's not all fierce competition. We did use parents, talk to them, we talk to his school teachers, we see him in high school, and we see him as a professional racer. We kind of go from like beginner to National Champion in the space of 20 minutes, really trippy. A lot of it's lighthearted. It's meant to be entertaining as well as a . . . It'll have a totally different pace from the DeCoster film because, with Roger, you're dealing with a World Champion — you're dealing with a guy of proven ability. I mean, something that Tibblin said that really impressed me, he said, Roger is the most perfect rider around today. His style is perfect — absolutely perfect. And he goes on to describe the style that Roger

has and why it's perfect. How methodical he is, and how much of a precision artist he is. You'll see that in the film.

DICK: It's funny, I think that anybody who photographs motocross races and then photographs Roger — we remark about it every day in the office when we go through proof sheets — Roger never does anything different. Every jump shot is the same, everything is the same. We can take a shot from different racetracks and his position, everything is exactly the same — he never does anything different. I caught him falling off a bike at Honda Hills where he hit a boulder and it knocked him off — and it was an unusual shot for Roger because you don't catch Roger making mistakes.

PETER: We got him falling off at Puyallup, you know.

DICK: Oh! Did you get that? That was right in front of Laurie, too.

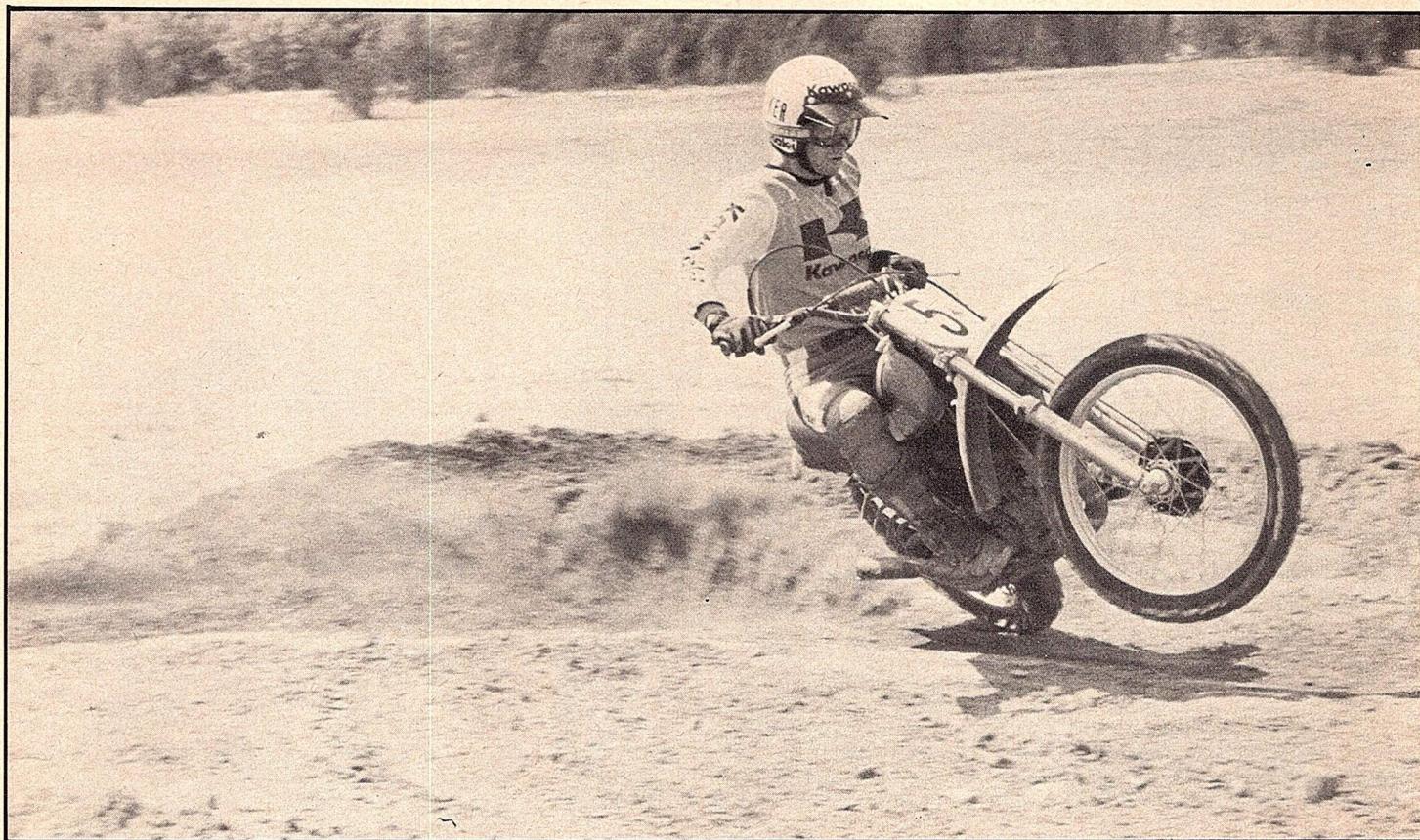
PETER: In slow motion, to boot! He comes over the hill crossed up — a little bit more than normal. And as he said afterwards, he saw the front wheel just froze solid . . .

DICK: He said his front brake locked.

PETER: . . . right. And he lands on the back wheel, the front wheel goes down. And then he just goes underneath, the bike lands on top of him — you see that. It must've hurt. I'm surprised he got up and continued.

DICK: But that's Roger. He never quits. I think that's the main thing about him being the World Champion.

PETER: One of the main insights I found with him is he's not hotheaded, every-
continued on page 55



The first thing you do after riding the new KX400 Kawasaki is try to make it work better. This is a vastly improved machine over last year's KX450. Because the 450 really didn't do anything right, you had the tendency to want to forget about it and go on to something more fun. The KX400, on the other hand, does a few things well enough to suck you into wanting it to work better. The trouble is, the KX400 is building you up only to let you down.

When moving to Open class machinery, the prospective buyer usually has one thing on his brain: power. There's nothing quite like the feel of 40 or so horses kicking you in the butt when you turn up the wick. Open class competition on the sportsperson level chucks many of the subtleties of the lightweight classes and reduces the battle down to war on the straights and survival in the turns. The KX400 meets you at that level perfectly.

If it's power you're looking for, it's power you get with the KX. To our way of thinking, Open machines come in three flavors: the zappy, high-revving 360s that come on like 250s and are tuned for the more professional among us; the "thundering herd" variety, usually a 400 or 450 that produces fierce quantities of horsepower at your

beck and call anywhere in the range of a four-speed gearbox; and finally the radical 400s that rev like the 360s but dump out power like the thundering herds. The KX400 falls in this last category. Its 401cc powerplant produces the finest and most usable delivery of any Open bike we've tested. From idle to its 8000 rpm redline, the KX engine is all racer. First gear is almost totally discarded for competition. Second gear starts, if properly executed, will put you in front of any pack in existence.

Taken at face value, it looks as though Kawasaki learned from their errors of last year. The old 450 produced power like an ocean liner but you had to shift it like crazy to get up speed. The trouble with that engine was it went for torque in all departments. Kawasaki engineers bored it big, ran mild ports through a long pipe and then bolted a millstone on the crank for flywheel. The result was tractor torque, but just when you wanted it to come on, it trailed off like a stoned pothead trying to order a pizza.

This year's 400 engine does it right. They finally got the idea that a motor with that much displacement is going to deliver torque no matter how you arrange it. So they laid it out radical with a little more

excitement in the ports, a short pipe and a fairly heavy flywheel to smooth everything out and put it all together. The result is what Suzuki 400 owners always wanted but never got: a powerband that comes on like a Saturn V rocket but won't send you through the snow fence every time you gassit.

It's too bad we can't say the same about the chassis. You get the distinct feeling on the KX400 that you're on some sort of an amusement park ride with a thrill at every turn. The forks jolt your arms when you run over terrain with anything more than two bumps on it. The front end bucks up and down like a speed boat, a sure indication that the forks just aren't working. The rear end, in spite of its forward mounted gas/oil shocks, feels stiff and transmits every impact right to the footpegs. If you hit a pothole or an abrupt ledge in the track, the rear wheel instantly takes evasive maneuvers to the left or right. When you're going over rough ground at speed, you get the impression that you are not in control of the bike and that your body is at the complete mercy of this mindless machine, a distracting situation at best.

The troubles with the forks are many. First, both compression and rebound pressures are too high. This



RACE TEST

KAWASAKI

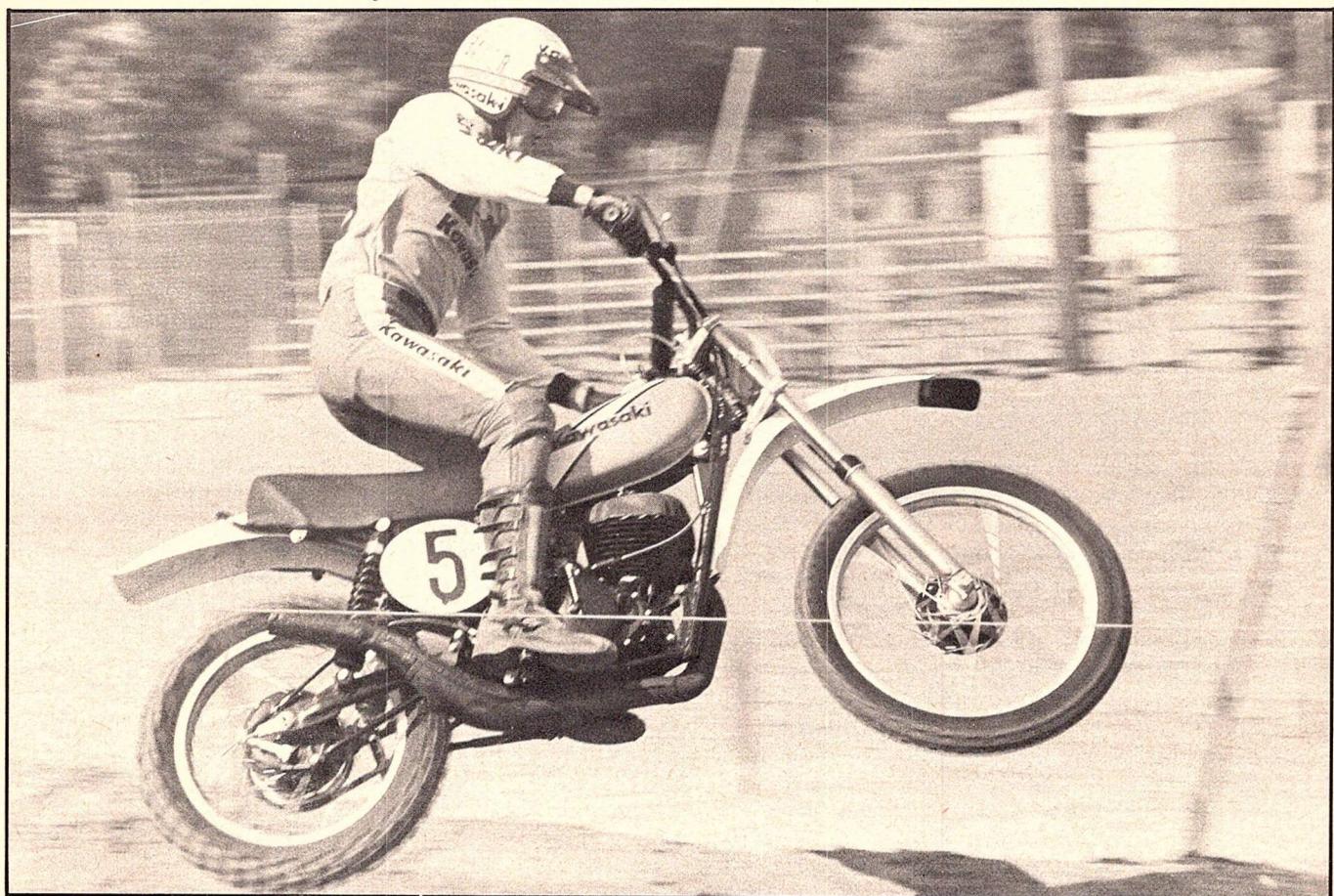
KX400

***Dyn-o-mite engine in a not so
dyn-o-mite chassis; it builds
you up just to let you down***

Rear shocks feel very stiff and the swingarm flexes. Steel chain guide isn't as good as the plastic one they had last year.



The 401cc Kawasaki engine is the best Open class mill we've tested.



Photos by Dick Miller, Paul Boudreau and Gunnar Lindstrom

condition makes the suspension slow to respond to a series of high-speed bumps. We drilled out the bottom holes in the damping rods slightly in an effort to increase the flow in this area. Another problem is that there is no hole at the top of the damping rod to relieve oil pressure from the middle chamber during compression. This causes the fork to "hydraulic lock," or stop moving halfway up the stroke. We drilled a tiny hole about an inch from the bottom of the piston. The last problem we dealt with was the fork springs. The stock spring is rated around 20 pounds for the first four inches and then climbs to around 29 pounds for the last three inches. This is too much, too early. The final gain shouldn't happen till around the last inch or two. On top of that, the spring is a production item off last year's KX250 and is about two inches too short for the new seven-inch forks. To make up the difference Kawasaki put in a spacer to preload the spring, but that still isn't enough to keep the 240-pound bike at the top of its travel. The result is that the forks work around the mid-point in the travel, right where that 29-pound gain is happening. We installed another half-inch of preload spacers and got a much softer ride because the suspension stroke was now using the lighter end of the spring. Unfortunately all this preload caused the spring to bottom before the end of the fork travel.

The total result of the modifications was a fair amount of improvement. The forks got so they were using most of the travel and the bumps didn't jolt your arms nearly as much. Our riders felt a little more in control of the bike. We worked out this fork engineering in the laboratory of Number One Products. To make life easier for the KX400 owner, Number One will be offering a "Trickit" fork improver kit complete with a new spring that will incorporate the changes mentioned above for under \$20.

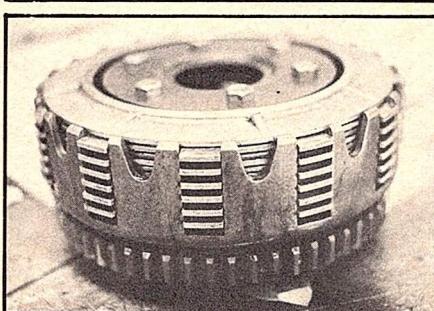
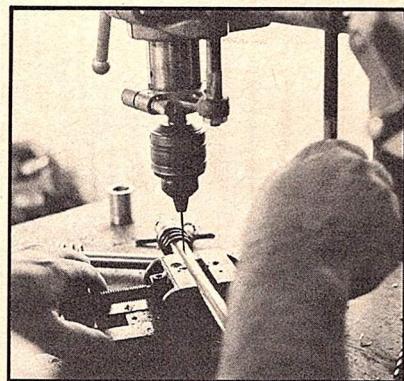
The rear shocks are another story. They're gas/oil Kyabas with pre-set damping and a progressive spring with five preload settings. With the preload in the softest position, the rear end felt stiff — like there was too much damping both on compression and rebound. The problem alleviated itself somewhat when we preloaded the fork springs, which transferred a little of the

KAWASAKI KX400

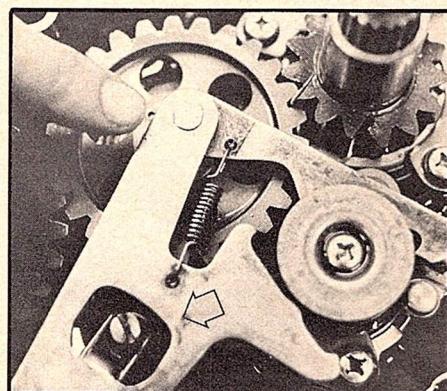
There is noticeable play in the axle bearings.



A few well-placed holes made the forks work much better.



*Clutch comes off in one piece.
Neat, eh?*



Shift ratchet arm hits back of clutch. Stopper pin (arrow) should be kept tight.

action to the rear, but the feeling persisted. Test riders using this type of shock have reported that they loosen up a little after a few hours, but this was not the case with ours. If the shocks don't feel right to you, adjustable units such as Boge Mulhollands or Konis are needed.

All the suspension tuning in the world isn't going to cure the Kawasaki's basic chassis problem: poor materials and loose tolerances. The frame and swingarm flex noticeably, but worse than that the wheel bearings and axles fit together so loosely that you can grasp either wheel with your hands and feel the play by jiggling them back and forth. The result on the track is that you never quite feel that the wheels are touching the ground, but rather riding on a field of BB's.

Turning the KX400 also revealed more handling ills. Because the bike has a high center of gravity, it's (A) fun to smash into berms and (B) frightening to try to steer around the inside of a turn. When you lean it over, the high center of gravity shifts

much of the weight to the inside and off the front wheel. Since the forward momentum (which is considerable on the KX400) remains the same, the front wheel tends to skid when the turning pressure is applied. This is called plowing, or pushing, or just plain wiping out the front end. It makes for sore elbows and hurt pride.

You can fix about half of the bike's pushing problems by getting rid of the flimsy Dunlop front knobby. We actually observed this tire fold under while negotiating a hard turn. A 3.00x21 Metzeler provided by Cooper Motors brought marked improvement, but only up to a point. Cracking it over too far will still send the front wheel on a line for the fence.

Almost, but not quite balancing the KX400's handling ills is an otherwise neat bike. Everything feels good and falls to hand, foot and bun quite nicely. The seat and tank are slender and comfortable. Plastic is first-rate. The footpegs, levers, throttle and even the grips are



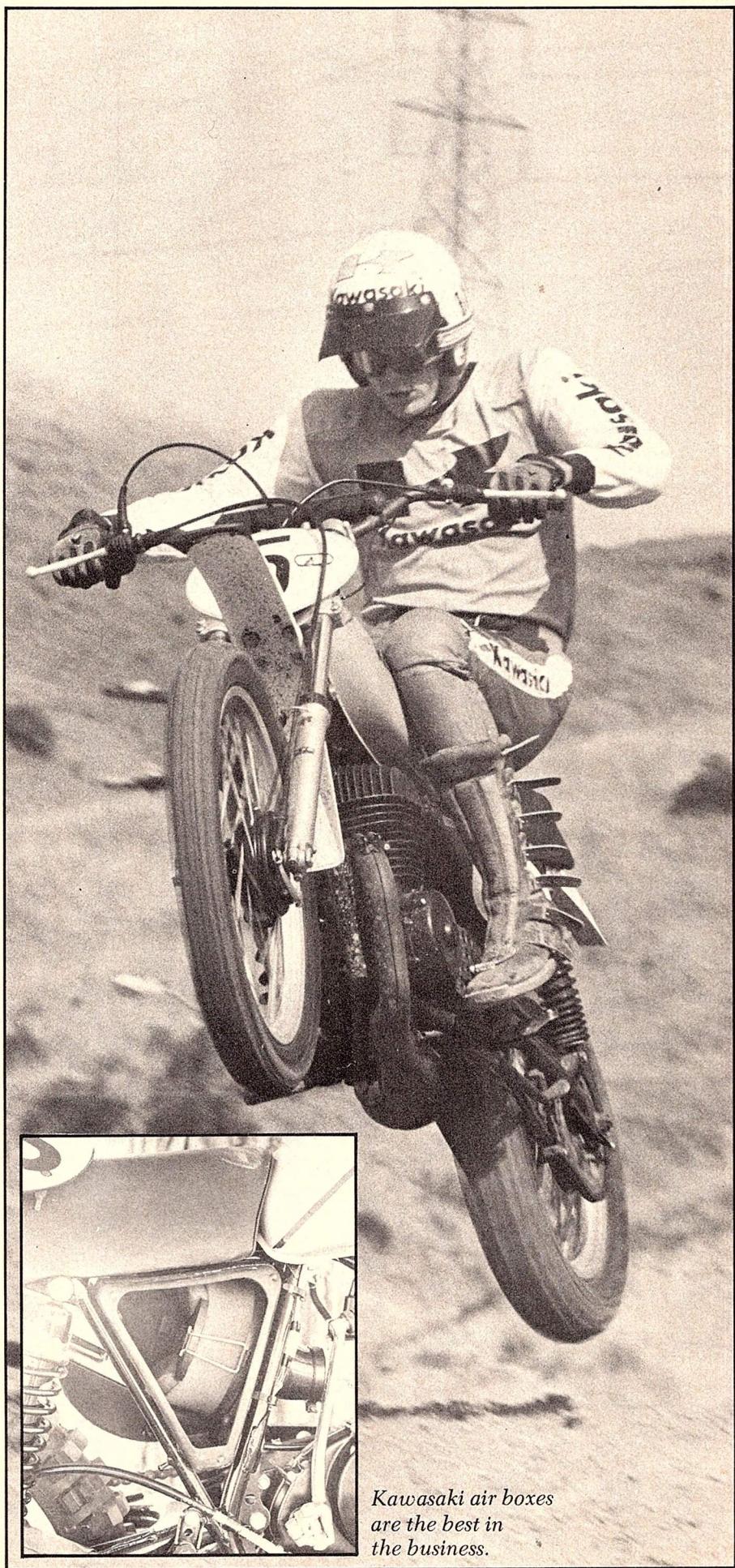
excellent. D.I.D rims and chain are top-quality.

The engine comes apart with a few rudimentary tools and is a breeze to work on. For instance, the clutch comes off in one piece so you don't have to mess with a bunch of plates, springs and screws. The air box and filter arrangement is still the absolute best in the business. The brakes work great. The engine starts every time with one gentle kick. The paint looks pretty and the welds are neat. Even the shift lever is trick. It has a knurled end just like on the factory race bikes.

A few boo-boos show up here and there. Last year's neat plastic chain guide which would never bend to knock the chain off has been replaced by a steel one that can be bashed and send the chain to parts unknown. The handlebars bend like a soda straw the first time you whomp them. We were told to check the exhaust pipe flange screws once in a while because they tend to loosen, but the engine would have to be removed to get a tool on the bottom screw.

The shifter shaft has enough sideplay to make one of the ratchet arms touch the back of the clutch basket when you up-shift. This causes the arm to bang into the arm stopper pin hard enough to loosen the pin, which will eventually hang up the ratchet arm and put you in a false neutral. This usually happens just as you're shutting down for a turn with a 40-foot drop into a drainage ditch on the other side of the berm. It would be a good idea to put some locking compound on the stopper pin locknut. This advice comes to you direct from the drainage ditch.

The KX400 is a typical Kawasaki racing package: dyn-o-mite engine in a not so dyn-o-mite chassis. In a race you'll probably get the holeshot and lead the first few laps, but eventually you'll settle down to medium speed to avoid symptoms of coronary arrest. If you're the type who wants a bike for tootin' around in the boonies and dragging to the races every now and then, and you aren't too particular about handling, the KX400 is right up your rooster tail. The power trip alone will give you the giggles. But if you're the type who demands ultimate performance from a motocross bike, it would be to your advantage if you shopped elsewhere.



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KAWASAKI KX400

SPECIFICATIONS

Make Kawasaki
Model KX400
Country of Manufacture Japan
Suggested retail price \$1385

ENGINE

Type ... Two-stroke sgl., piston port
Bore & Stroke 82mm x 76mm
Displacement 401cc
Compression Ratio 6.5:1
Cylinder Iron sleeve, 5-port
Carburetion 36mm Mikuni
Ignition Electronic CDI
Lubrication Pre-mix
Air Filter Foam

TRANSMISSION

Type Five-speed
Ratios .. 2.50, 1.77, 1.40, 1.19, 1.06
Primary Gear, wet clutch
Ratio 2.52
Drive Chain D.I.D TM525

SUSPENSION

Front Hydraulic sliders
Rear Gas/oil shocks, forward mount

Travel:

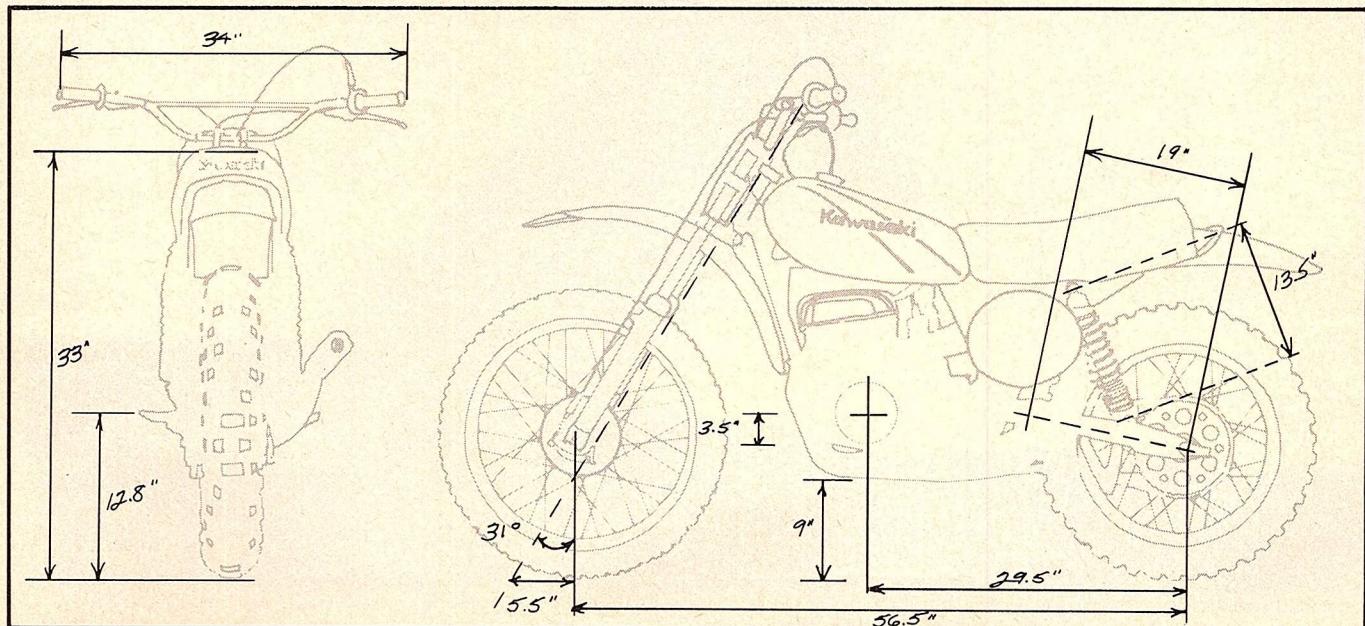
Front 7 1/4 inches
Rear 7 inches

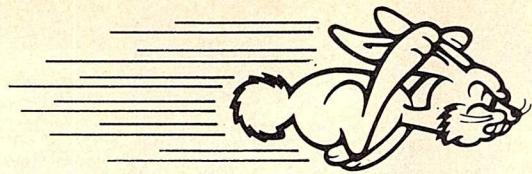
DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase 56.5 inches
Ground Clearance 9 inches
Seat Height 33 inches
Track Weight 237 pounds
Weight Bias 44% front, 56% rear

CAPACITIES

Fuel 2.2 gallons
Transmission 950cc
Forks 228cc





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PETER STARR from page 47

thing is cool. He's the only motocross racer who warms up before a race. He's the only guy who will wear a warm jacket to keep his muscles warm during a race. Or he'll jog around the track. Like he was the only rider at the Carlsbad race who jogged before the race to warm up his muscles. And that's so important with a guy who's gotta be consistently winning, to keep his body in good shape. That's something that I didn't realize until Tibblin gave me a rundown on his program. And that's exactly what Roger does. And little things, just the little things; as he sits on the starting line and when he revs his engine, he doesn't grab his grip, he does it with his fingertips. Really, it's kind of trippy, in a way. It's the little things like that that we picked up on in the film. Practice — he won't go out and practice immediately. You know, say practice starts at 9:00, he probably won't go out there until 10:30. The reason being, he says, let the course settle itself. Let the other people wear it out, then find out where the berms are when he gets out there. Because, we were waiting for him out in practice at Puyallup — and this was the first race we covered. Everybody else was out there, but no Roger. So we thought we'd find out why he wasn't practicing — that's when he explained all that. Really a trip, because everybody else is out there blasting away from

the first go. And he says, why wear yourself out? With an hour and a half of motocrossing in the afternoon, he's exactly true; why wear yourself out? It's a long ways.

DICK: Did Roger have any ideas when you first talked about doing the film?

PETER: Not really. Not at that point. At that point, he just thought it'd be a good idea. He thought it would be good for him, to have a film made. He wasn't blatant about it, really subtle — it was more an inquiry.

DICK: Plus he put it in your mind.

PETER: Right. And it worked (chuckles).

DICK: He has a way of doing that (laughs).

PETER: I phoned Suzuki and set it up and I wrote the story. It's just a trip into his head. I'm not doing many interviews on-camera, because I think you can do a lot more by showing what he does and using voice-over more than a straight on-camera interview. But I do interview him after each and every race in terms of what happened during the race that was of significant importance. After falling off at Puyallup, the dust at Livermore that he didn't like . . .

DICK: Roger seems very conscious of . . . I mean, he wants people to know what happened, you know, after a race or moto, like at the Carlsbad GP this year. That was for Grand Prix points

continued

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PETER STARR

and everything and he was running very tight. Heikki was catching him and finally Roger backed off, he started to slow, and Heikki passed him. Everybody was sayin', well, Heikki's faster — but what's a crowd know anyway — I mean, they were seein' with their own eyes that he got passed. But Roger, first

thing when I saw him at the truck, he said, I broke my wheel. He explained, "I couldn't go any faster." And he says, "I knew that if I went just one hair faster then I was gonna get off very bad on that downhill." But he felt so bad, he almost sensed that everybody *thought* that he was beat physically, that he got beat by

another rider.

PETER: It seems like when he started to race, he set out to be Champion. Even though it was six years ago when he was bopping around on his CZ — he was doing all his own work. He was serving his apprenticeship. Everybody who knows him that I interviewed says exactly the same thing about how thorough he is. He rides about 85 percent of his capacity. He never rides 100 percent of his capability unless he has to. Like at Livermore — he was behind Weil, he knew he would win. And he was just sitting on Weil's tail waiting for him to make a mistake. And he did, and he just blasted by him and he won. It was like that — at Saddleback — first Saddleback moto, of course, he had that carburetion trouble; the second one he passed Weil in mid-air coming down this one jump — which we have on film, and then Weil looped it, which we also have on film — which is a mistake that, you know, DeCoster would never do because he is just trained differently. Weil squirted out of the corner and looped it backwards, which is unforgivable, really, for a guy of his caliber. And DeCoster would never do that.

DICK: When are you gonna have that film finished?

PETER: It's probably gonna be the end of March before it's finished. (It wasn't.) We'll start television distribution with all of these films together, as a series of five. We're re-packaging Bad Rock.

DICK: Are you planning on continuing this motorcycle film thing?

PETER: I've got enough footage on some of these things to start thinking about making a feature film. See, when Bruce Brown made "On Any Sunday," he was the first. And I think he did an incredible job in introducing motorcycling to a vast number of people. There never has been — really — a good film on motorcycling. Yeah, "On Any Sunday" was good; but it was the *first* rather than the best, and the best hasn't come yet. He did some really super stuff — he had great photographers out there, I thought he put it together very well. But it was the *first* rather than the *best*. I've got ideas that I would like to see happen that wouldn't necessarily be the be-all and end-all, but it would perhaps take over where Bruce left off. It's a film that I would like to do based on the World Champions in the various sports and aspects of motorcycling — road racing, motocross, flattrack perhaps — you know, the Mile. Speedway, perhaps trials — take a long time shooting with these Champions.

DICK: You mean, combine it all in one film?

PETER: Yeah. Called something like "Champions," or . . .

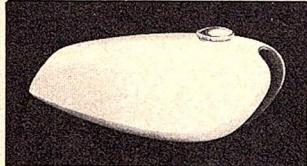
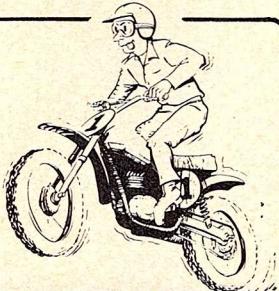
DICK: Pretty hard to do, isn't it?

PETER: Yeah, but anything you wanna

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ANC TANKS

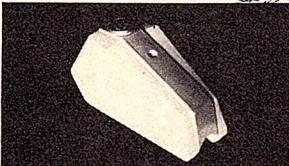
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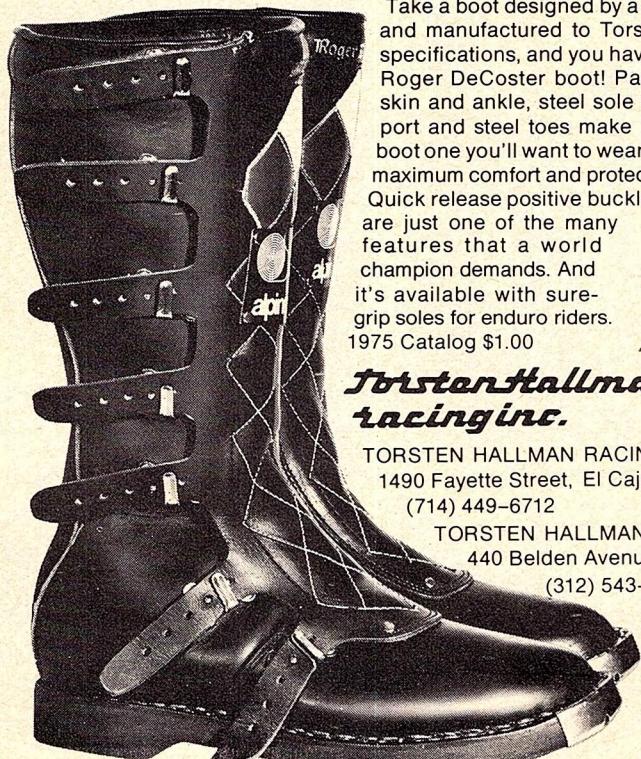
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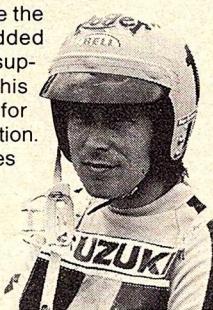
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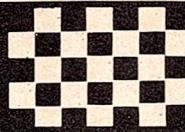
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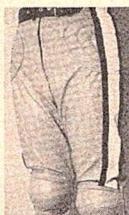
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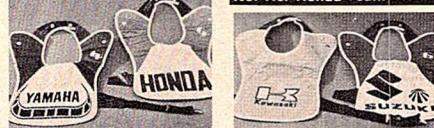


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No. 1154-1 Husky colors & logo
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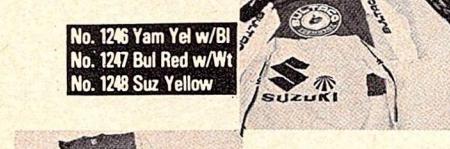
No. 1204 Goggles
No. 1205 Clear Lens



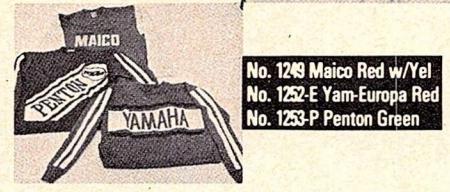
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No. 1243 Hus Blu w/Wt
No. 1244 Kaw Lime w/Wt
No. 1245 Hon Red, Blu, Wt



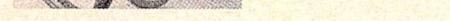
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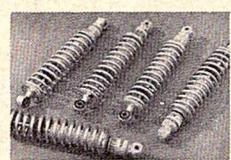
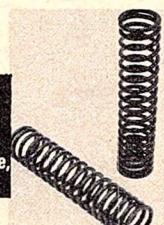
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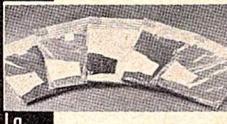
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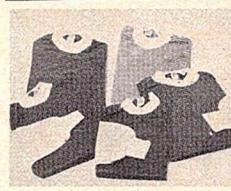
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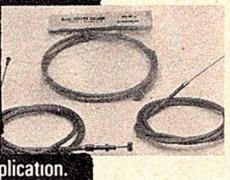
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PETER STARR

do that's good is gonna be difficult. The best magazine is always difficult to put out. If it's not a challenge, it's not worth doing. That's why people fall off motorcycles — they always want to do things they can't do, you know (chuckles). But, I would like to do that. I changed the Honda-Pennzoil film, and I didn't even ask them. I just changed it — you know, once I wrote what I wrote for them and they approved it, once we started to shoot it, once I actually met Marty Smith, it didn't make any sense any more. Because he was just really a different kind of person from what I really imagined.

DICK: What was the difference?

PETER: He's one of the most humble kids I think I've met in motocross. I mean, to look at the footage you saw today, it doesn't really show that, because he was in his element there — riding his bike, and there's no audience, except us. But we wanted to shoot him in his high school, and he would not do it. And the reason he wouldn't do it he said is because everybody "would tease me." He said, "Everybody would start callin' me 'hey Marty Smith filmstar' (said with mocking tone)." And he wouldn't go for it. I had to convince him that we could film him in school and convince everybody we're doing an educational film. And everybody, except the principal of the school, thought we were doing a film on education for the San Diego Unified School District (laughter). We went into the school, we lit the classroom, and we filmed several people in that class — asking questions and participating in the class, one of which was Marty.

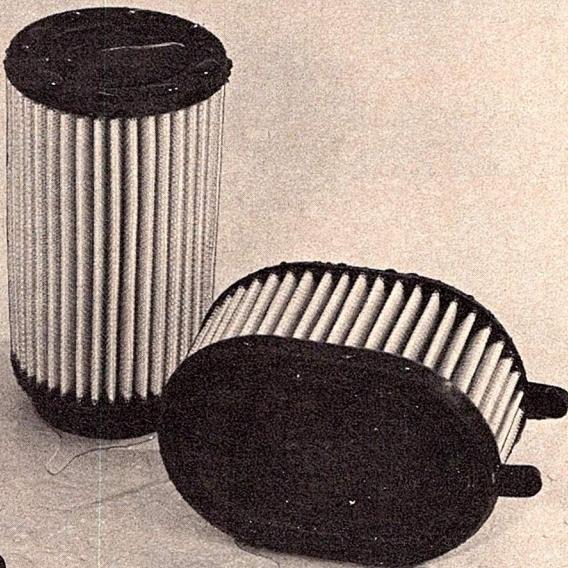
And then we just cut out everybody else, of course. Because he totally freaked out in front of the camera. And, as it turned out, we were right, nobody knew what was going on — and they still don't know to this day. They won't know 'til he's left school — the film will be out about the same time that he graduates.

DICK: So, he wasn't the type of kid that you expected?

PETER: No. I think he's a neat kid. He's got an incredible amount of riding ability. The only thing he really needs to do is to work on his physical conditioning. Tibblin thinks, and I tend to agree, that if he can work on his conditioning, he stands a chance of being the World Champion. He certainly rides his bike like a World Champion — he's fast, incredibly fast — and it's just stamina that he has to build up, and work on his body so that he can compete week after week in Grand Prix status events. But he's a neat kid — he really is. He's, you know . . . doesn't smoke, doesn't drink, very clean living — positive image for motocross, I think, for kids generally.

DICK: Do you think the film is gonna help the kids? We get letters day in and

continued



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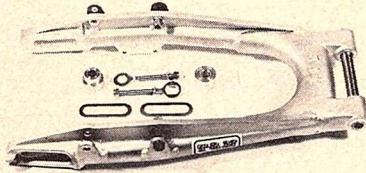
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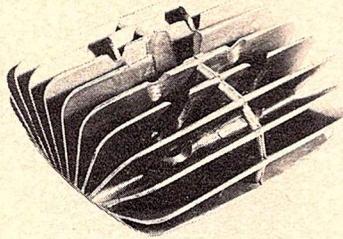


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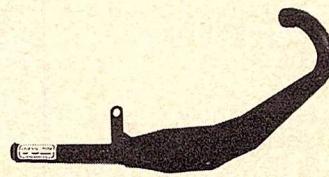


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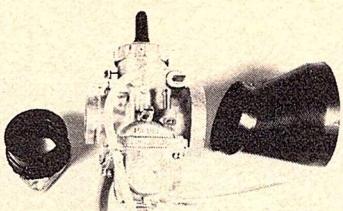


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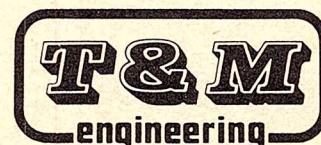


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PETER STARR

day out, usually a 14- or 15-year-old kid who'll write us a letter. He wants to ride a motorcycle and his parents won't let him. I mean, they'll let him do *anything* else but ride a motorcycle.

PETER: This is one of the points in the film that I wanted to make; I interviewed Marty's parents. You know, here's a couple of parents that have an 18-year-old kid who's been riding since he was 13 and he's the AMA National Champion of the 125 class. And I wanted to talk to the parents about how they feel. Yes, they were apprehensive. Yes, they didn't quite know what it was all about, although they knew what motorcycling was. They had a little step through Honda back in the old days. But now, they're just gung-ho for it — absolutely gung-ho. They travel all over . . . you know, as many races as they can with him. It's a weekend trip, and off they go. They're just all for it. I'm hoping to prove through the film that motorcycling can be a family weekend participation sport. But, yes, there is a right way to do it. It's the same with the Tibblin school — there's a right way to ride your bike. If you do it the right way, then you stand a better than excellent chance of not gettin' hurt. That's the main thing — there's a right way and a wrong way. If you do anything the wrong way, you're gonna get hurt. I mean, if your parents are responsible enough to say to their kid, OK, we'll let you have a motorcycle — BUT, you'll need a helmet, put on a decent pair of boots, go to the Rolf Tibblin School of Motocross, or some such place where you can be taught. I think Tibblin has it over anybody else — he's in the physical exercise department and nutrition department — that guy really knows his stuff. REALLY knows his stuff. I think that any kid can learn to ride safely, can have a lot of fun. Not only that, it keeps kids off the street. It's the same old story, you know, but it does, it does keep kids off the street. They're so busy working on that bike, racing, you know — talking motorcycle talk. They don't have time for all this other crap that goes on down in the city.

DICK: But it's damn expensive. The kids who really *need* it to keep them off the streets can't afford it.

PETER: Honda has this program with the YMCA — they donate bikes. Sure would be neat if they could donate two or three bikes. That's ideal thinking, but . . . it's like any program, motocross is new in America. You can't really expect anything to happen overnight — we're hoping when we get through with this film, we will at least convert some people to the point of view that . . .

DICK: What do you see as far as motocross is concerned?

PETER: I think America is probably three to four years away from having a rider who can honestly compete on an

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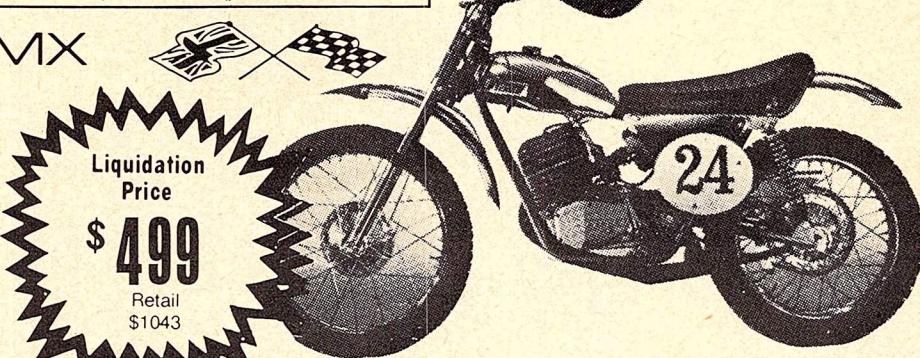
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PETER STARR

equal basis with the Europeans. A lot of it is a matter of physical stamina.

DICK: I've noticed that all the top Europeans are in their middle 20s, or older.

PETER: Yeah. I think Marty and a couple other guys his age now are the ones that are gonna make the big American push, I'd say, in about three to four years. Well, I'll tell you, Brad Lackey — I think Pomeroy is a better rider than Lackey — but they don't seem to have the dedication somehow. There seems to be some in Lackey, just from what I've observed.

DICK: Don't forget that they've been racin' now for a *long* time, even as young as they are. They've been racin' eight, nine years or more.

PETER: Do you think they're getting tired already?

DICK: Well, they've achieved Number One status in their own country. They haven't done it in the world — but I think they're goin' about it in the right way. They're over there runnin' the Grand Prix circuit — and it isn't a bed of roses. They do have sponsors, which is better than most — probably better than half the Europeans, they've got a better deal. But I think that's the way to do it — until such time as we have demanding tracks over here.

PETER: Yeah, the tracks over here are really too man-made. They put on a grader and a bulldozer and you've got a motorcycle track. See, what America does that doesn't happen in Europe in motocross, but it happens in soccer in Europe, is, they're turning motocross into a stadium sport. Not always in a stadium, but basically the same trip. That could be incredibly good for motocross. I think the Superbowl of Motocross is a great promotion. I don't know the guy that does it and I've heard weird and wonderful stories about it.

DICK: Mike Goodwin.

PETER: But basically, he's got a very successful promotion going. And that probably turns more people in one night on to motocross than any other single event in the whole country. I think it's a super deal, I really do.

DICK: But, it's a spectacle — it's not...

PETER: Yes, it's the glamor — it's Rome and the lions and the Christians all over again. And I think that's the way motocross is going here.

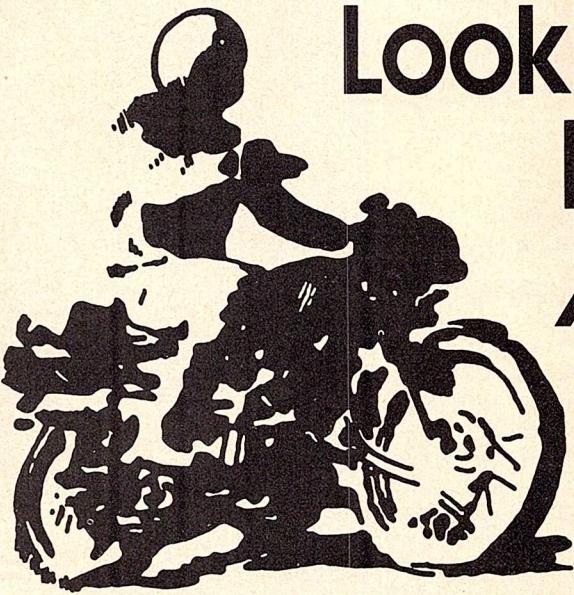
DICK: Why? Because we're lazy? Because we're lazy spectators?

PETER: Ummmm... yeah, I think basically there's a truth in that. But I think it's lazy spectators from the point of view that, to make the money to get the people, you've got to get Joe Audience away from his TV set.

DICK: Gotta really entertain him.

PETER: Right. You bet. That's the whole key — you said, "entertain."

continued



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PETER STARR

That's the whole trip — you've gotta get him away from that TV set, you've gotta get him away from the hockey game or from the football game. Football is entertaining. Now, I'm beginning to understand football and I'm beginning to like it. And motocross could be like that, but . . .

DICK: Have you seen the Superbowl?

PETER: No.

DICK: It is exciting.

PETER: I think motocross, we've seen it expand, what, 3000 percent in five years.

DICK: Yeah. Really! But also there's a decline in Europe.

PETER: Yeah, uh, but the decline in Europe is more of an economic one than it is in interest. They don't have the money — they don't have the freedom that money gives you; that's the first thing. See, over here, kids are buying bicycles as playtoys, and in a number of places are doing wheelies up and down the driveway, right? In England a kid buys a bicycle to ride to school on; and he has to ride that bike five, six miles to school there, and five, six miles back. So he's not going to buy a motocross bicycle to ride on, because that ain't going to get him there in three days, you know. So he buys a ten-speed, OK, or the equivalent because he's got to use it as a piece of transportation equipment. And it's the same with people when they're starting work: They want a motorcycle, and they can't afford to go motocross racing, 'cause they don't have the money, so they buy a street bike. I think when the economy gets better the motocross thing will get better too. And I don't think it's a lack of interest.

DICK: What's it cost to go to a GP motocross? You know, like you pay \$7 here to go to a Trans-AMA race.

PETER: You probably would pay, uh, with inflation, you're probably paying \$3.

DICK: So it's half.

PETER: So's your income. I think you're probably paying on a par with what a lot of Americans are paying.

DICK: Have you noticed that most people from outside the United States comment on how young the motocrossers and dirt riders are here and on all the equipment that they have?

PETER: The thing that blows my mind, I'll tell you, I have a 350 Pursang (Bultaco) and I go out occasionally and blast around. I'm not fast; I enjoy myself; it drives me absolutely nuts to have some 15-year-old on a 125 ring-adding come charging by me totally locked up, and there's just no way I'm going to keep up with him. No way! I've fallen off more times than I can remember trying to kick off with some young hot rider. Blows my mind, the kid's got everything. He's got the shoulder pads, the boots, the leathers, you know, the best of everything. Blows my mind. You know,

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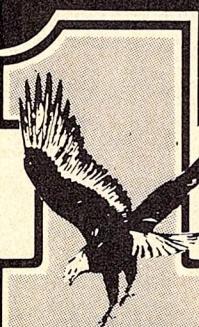
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PETER STARR

I don't know how they do it. Their parents, obviously, help them a lot, but it's just amazing. And they ride . . . you know they're good! These kids are really good! It's not just a matter of they've got good gear. It doesn't matter if you put them on a 125 Penton or a 125 Honda or whatever. Maybe they've got the fastest bike on the block, but they've still got to ride it at that speed to win. Because there are 20 other guys right down his neck.

DICK: Do you have trouble now, shooting in the United States? Problems, restrictions and things?

PETER: It's only in California. We were out shooting Roger and Laurie on a street bike and we crossed into Ventura County, and we hadn't been there five minutes and there were three cars there to stop the shooting.

DICK: Police cars?

PETER: No, County employees asking us for our permission to shoot film, and they eventually went and got the Highway Patrol. Just to give you some idea of the . . . What do you do? You've got everybody, who's got to get in on the damn act. Everybody has to prove to themselves that they're whatever they are. And this is wrong, I think this is one of mankind's problems. It's an element of mankind that's there. Everybody has to be out to prove something. If it's a marshal at the racetrack, he's got his flag, and he's got his authority, and by God, he's going to show everybody he's somebody. It's the same with race officials, and . . .

DICK: (Laughs.) You want to say something? And you're not saying it.

PETER: Well, I think it's because I'm in a very delicate situation with a couple of people right now, and everybody's got to prove to themselves that they're a male, and a red-blooded American, and bully for them. So, they have to fight somewhere, but don't come across me. It's a bugger, you know.

DICK: How does it work for you, though?

PETER: Very poorly, yeah; you know, we have constant hassles with "officials" — like at Livermore, the guy who was organizing Livermore just bent over backwards to help us, neat guy, David Hart, couldn't do enough for us, and literally, did everything that he could possibly do.

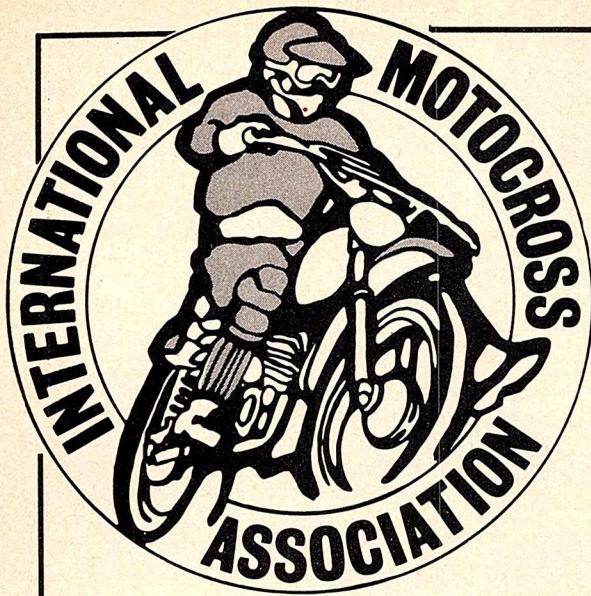
DICK: It's a shame he didn't do more shaping that track!

PETER: Yeah, well, I don't know if he had much on that, but he was the PR guy, and he, they, would help us set up our cameras and this bloody goon comes over with this Doberman pinscher, right?

DICK: I remember him!

PETER: And his gun. You know, if anything was intended to incite a riot it

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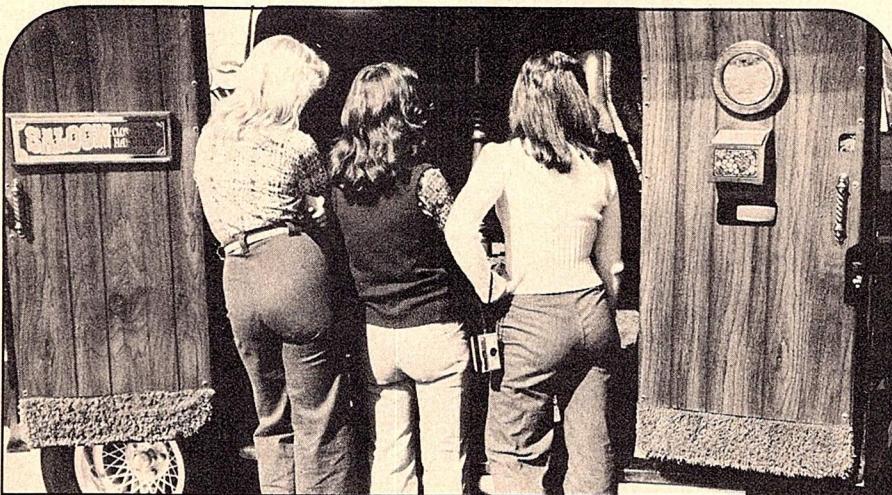
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PETER STARR

was putting a guy in there with a gun, and a Doberman pinscher, right, you know, and I don't know what it takes these days to . . . to . . .

DICK: He was a nasty one.

PETER: You get some rinky-dink little kid with his armband out and it says Official, and he's God's gift to officialdom, and it's a sore point with me.

DICK: Don't feel alone.

PETER: But getting back to motocross, I think, potentially, it's the biggest thing, I really do.

DICK: Why aren't we getting the big sponsorships like we should be, in motocross? I know that money is being volunteered for.

PETER: You know, when people stop playing politics, we'll have a lot better trip. I wanted to do a big TV special called "America, this is motorcycling." Do a one-hour show, get the biggest names in the industry — not just motorcycling, but the biggest entertainment names; we'd do a big motorcycle entertainment special, everything about it in motorcycling — James Garner, the Steve McQueens on television, the benefit, the money would go to the AMA. Do you think I could get them off the ground?

DICK: Did you talk to them about it?

PETER: I went through about six months of meetings with Boards of Directors, the AMA, all the big companies.

DICK: You must have met with a lot of people, as much as they change. I've been getting feedback from several sources around the industry that some of these large contributors or contingency people or sponsors of events want to get into motocross. They've heard about motocross, they want to get involved in it.

PETER: The AMA is channeling the money away from it.

DICK: And the AMA is channeling it into flattrack and road racing.

PETER: Now, I've been a road racer and I like road racing, but any sport has to stand on its own. Who should arbitrarily decide [I've heard the same rumors] this money should go to flattrack or this money should go to road racing and none go to motocross? And I don't think it should be decided that way. Well, you see, the whole point is there're four road races this year, four national road races. Hardly worth getting out of bed for. I mean that's what Suzuki's position is. They say, what's the point in having a team if it's cheaper to fly guys from England for four races and fly them back again. Just to maintain a team in the United States — and they're right. You now, yeah, road racing needs money, we need promoters, we need sponsors, and so on, but if a sponsor says, hey, I want to be in motocross, then they should say fine, you can be in motocross. They

continued on page 71

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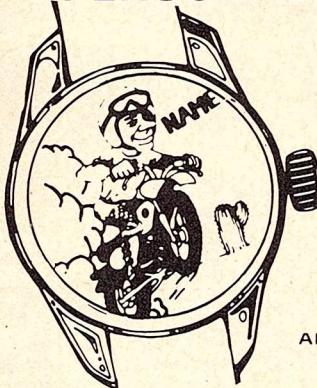
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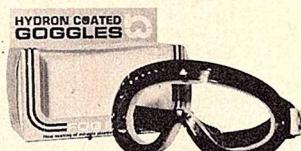
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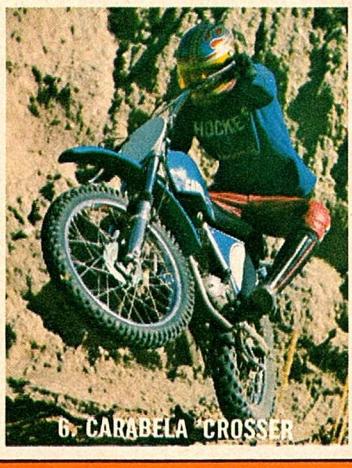
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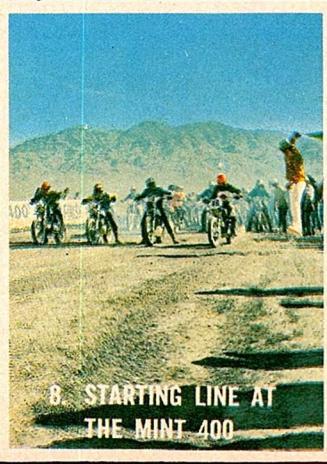
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PETER STARR

shouldn't say, well we need the money in flattrack, because flattracking needs more support than motocross. And motocross is where the money is. Kids love it.

DICK: People love it. It's exciting.

PETER: Yes, the reason it's exciting is that people can watch standing right next to it. And motocross is spectacular. When you get four or five guys that are of equal ability it can really be a trip. I don't know, I just wish we could get out of the politics trip; if it's not jeopardy, it's politics, these bloody American politics, American policy, American versus European politics, and the . . . How ridiculous. Motorcycling has enough enemies from the outside, without all this bitching on the inside. We have enough going against us without getting into more hassles. I've got this funny feeling that it's going to be such a political trip, making this next motorcycle film, that I'll get through the first few weeks, then say screw it. I can't be bothered. I'll make a film about penguins or something. I enjoy what I'm doing now, I enjoy it very much and I think it shows in my work. If you liked the Ontario film, I know you'll like the DeCoster film, the Marty Smith film, a little of which you've seen tonight.

DICK: Yeah, it's going to be good. (It is good. I hope you have the opportunity to see it. —D. Miller)

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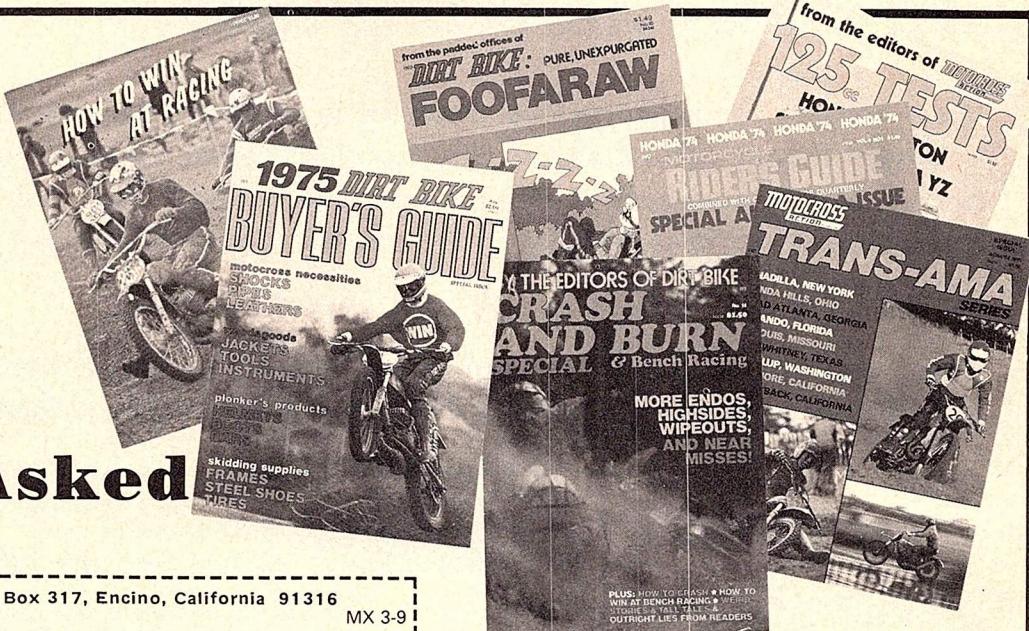
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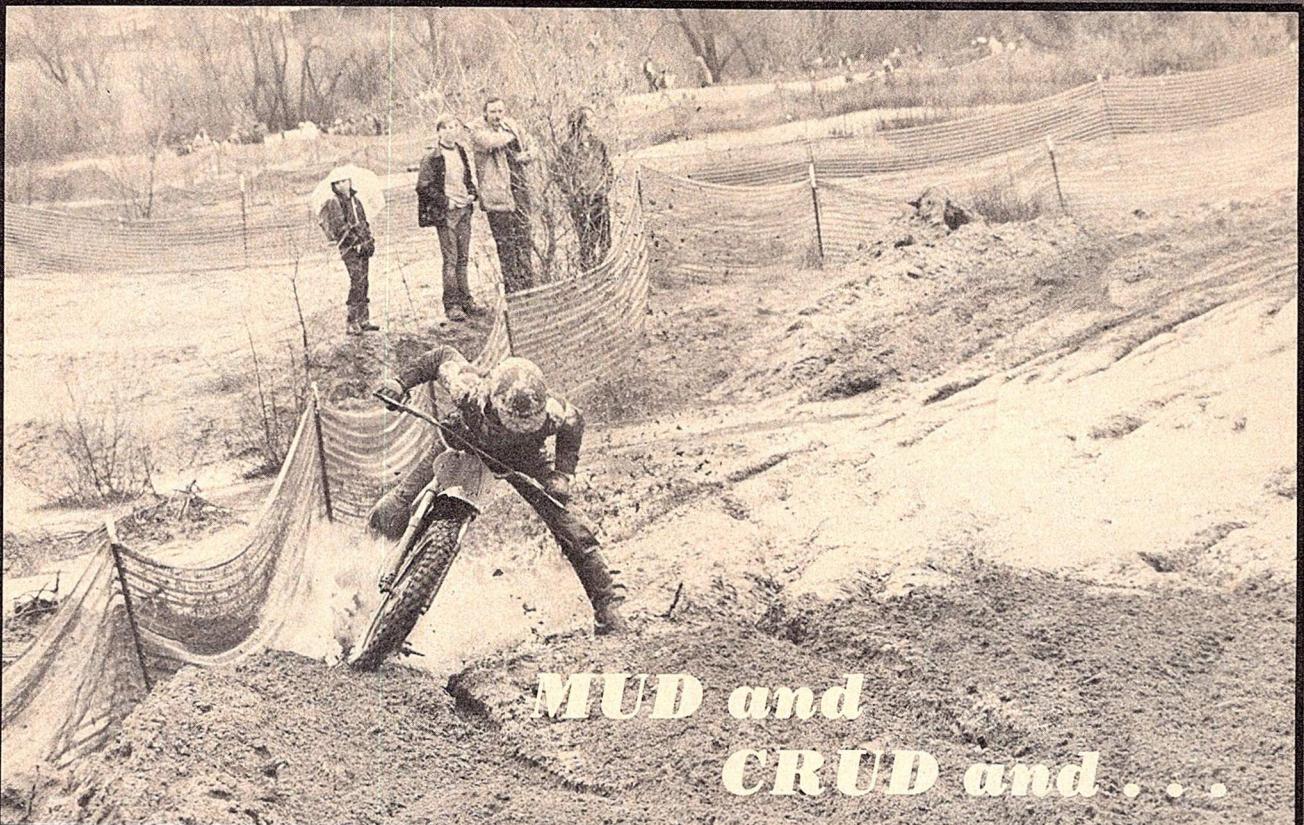
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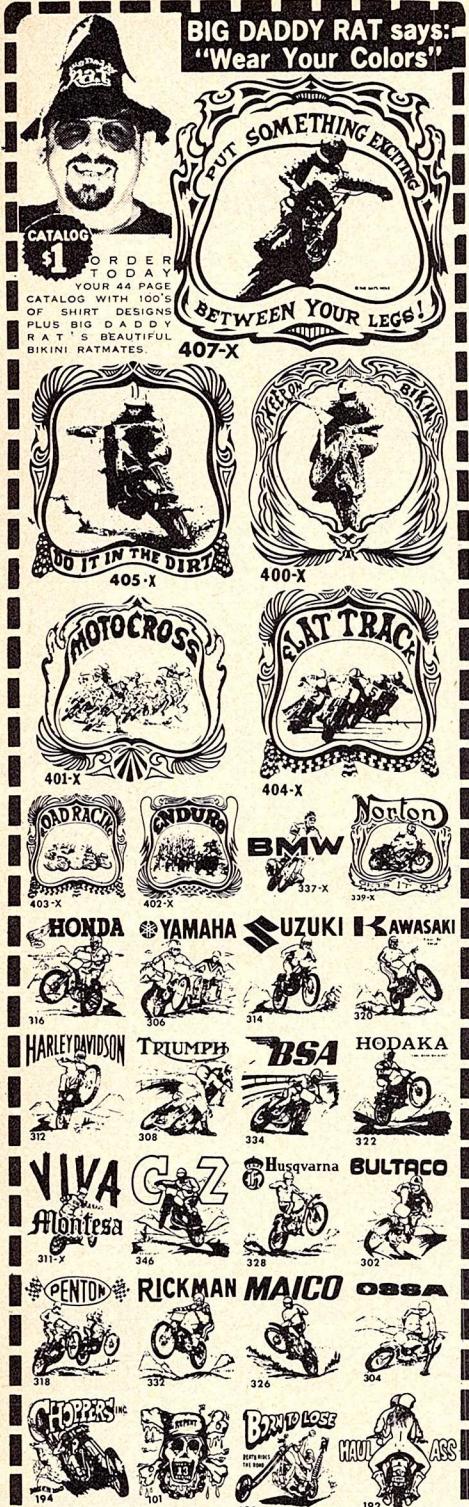
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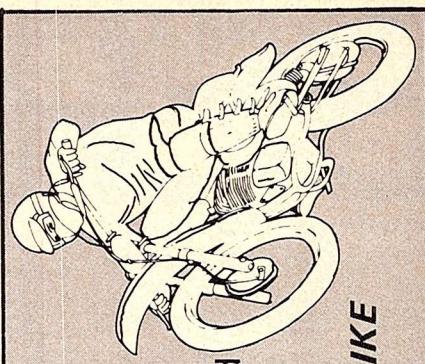
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